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What Future Pete?

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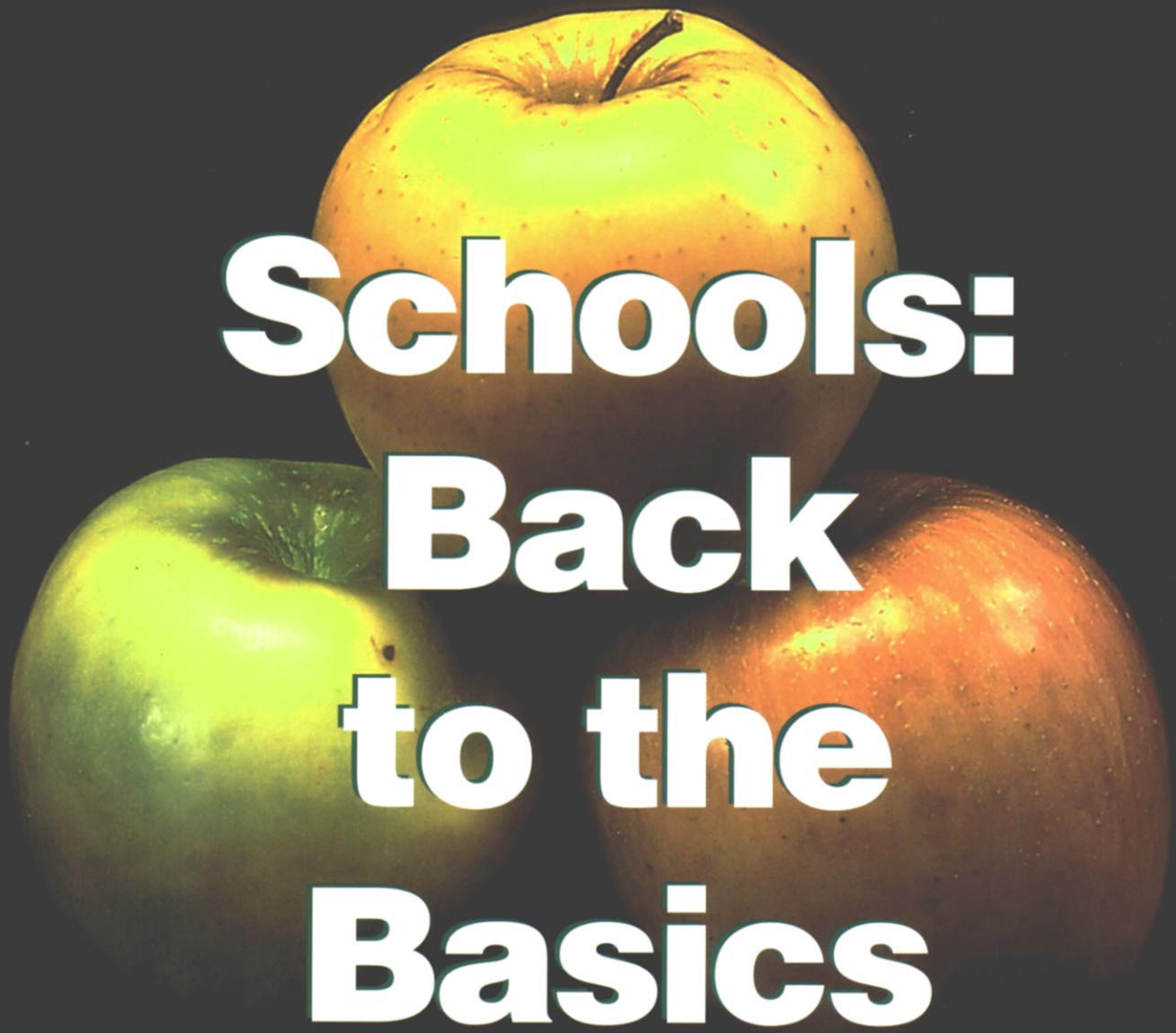

Schools: Back to the Basics

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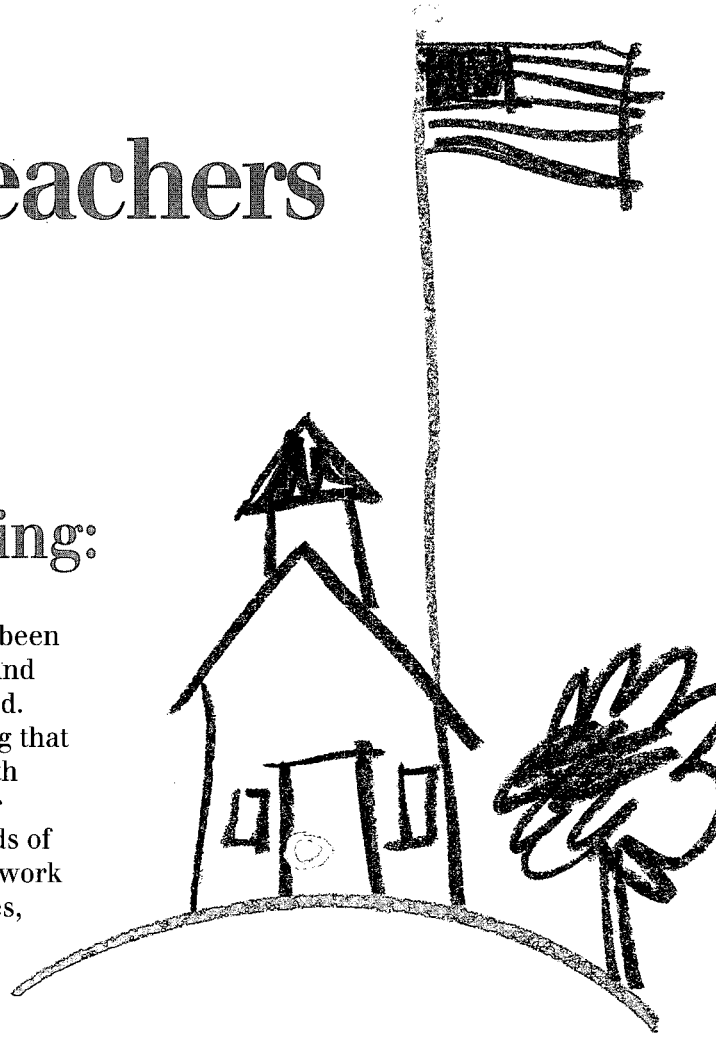

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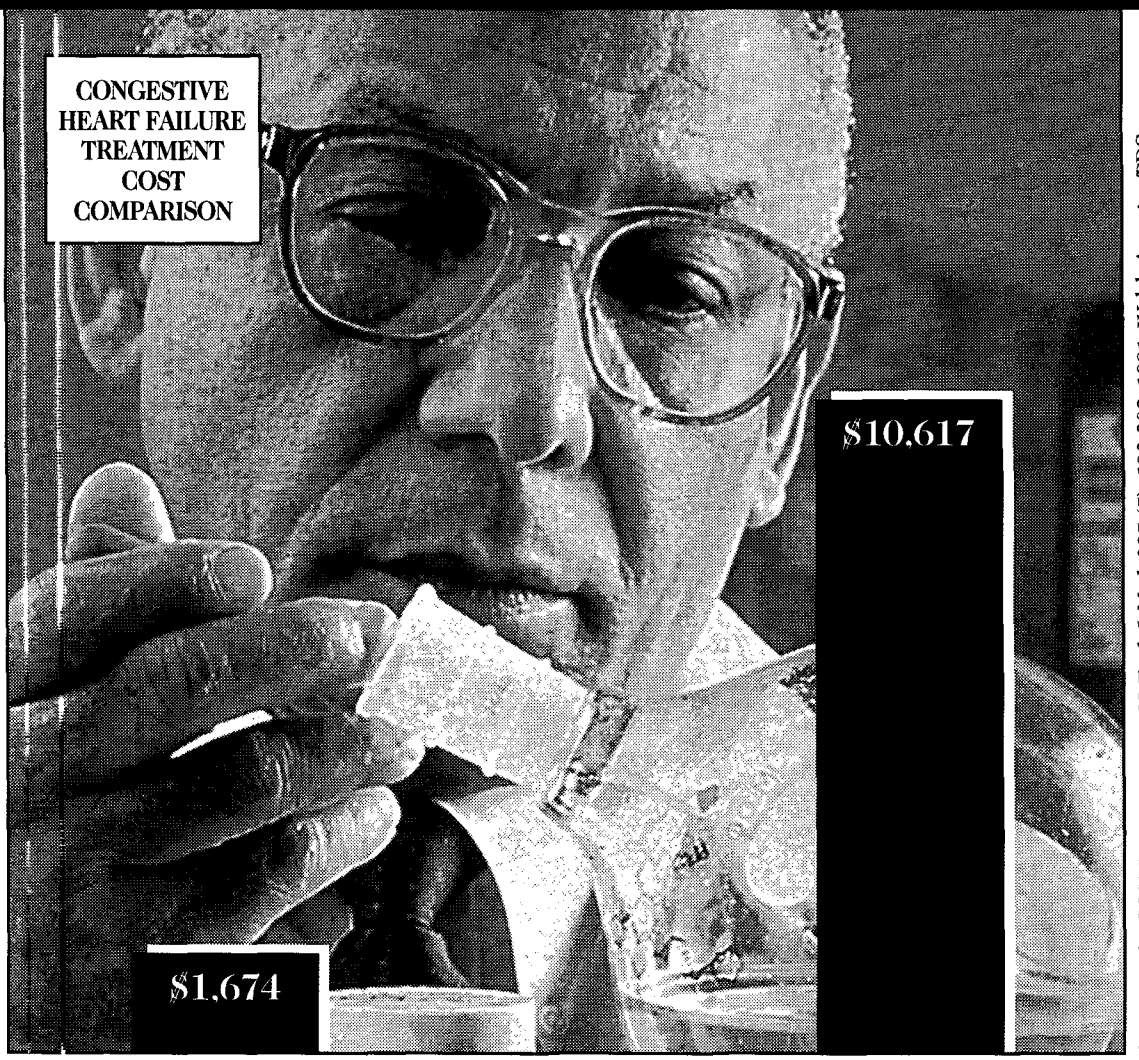

Sources: The SOLVD Investigators, N. Engl. J. Med. 325 (5): 293-302, 1991; Walsh America/PDS.

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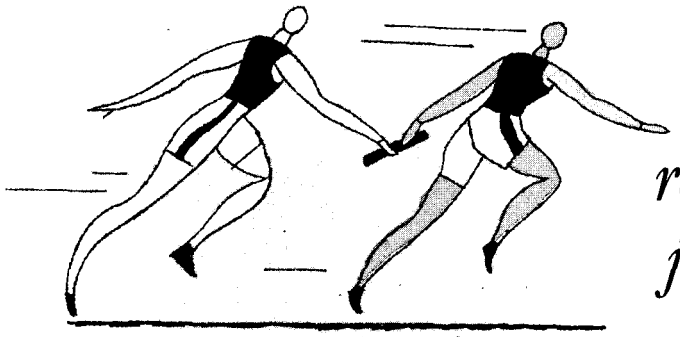

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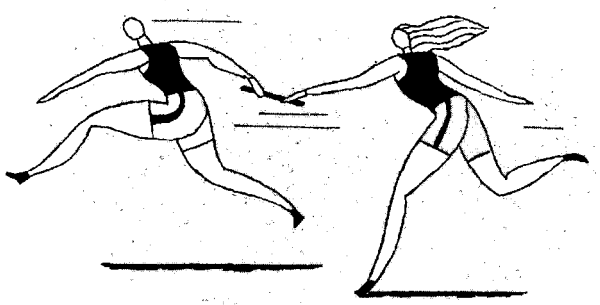

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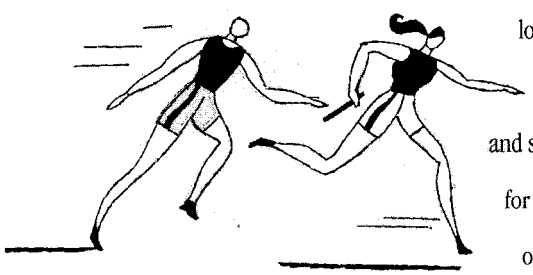

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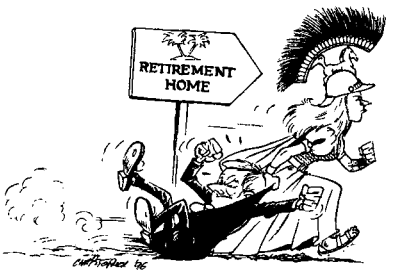
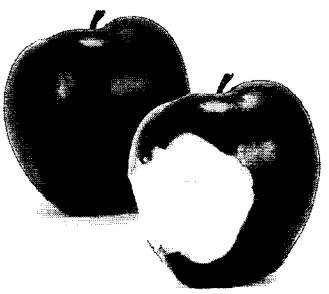
JUNE 1996
VOLUME XXVII, NUMBER 6

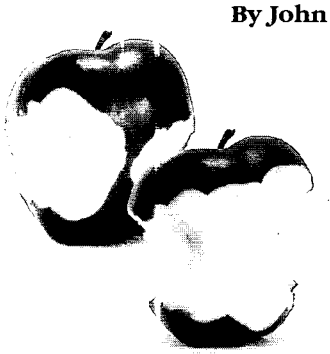
8 **What future Pete?**
Termed out of office in 1998, Pete Wilson has two years to create some kind of legacy if he wants to be remembered as more than the unluckiest governor in California history. And if he ever wants to be known as President Wilson.
By Steve Scott



14 **Back to the basics**
The education debate these days is a Babel of arguments over class size, funding, assessment tests, ethnocentric curricula, new math, phonics, whole language, charter schools, *ad nauseum*. Lost in the debate is any discussion of the basics — why we send our children to school in the first place and what we expect them to learn.
By A.G. Block



20 **Faces of education**
Who are the people and groups that influence education policy in California. The *Journal* provides 18 education "trading cards" on those who fill that role.
By John Borland



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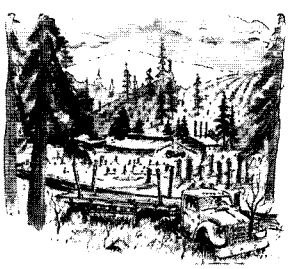
More than a decade ago, then-Superintendent of Public Instruction Bill Honig launched an education-reform movement with a series of policy changes. Some have been successful; some have been spectacular failures.
By Lynelle Jolley



33 **Paying the recall tab**
Democratic Assemblyman Mike Machado spent nearly $900,000 defending himself against a recall effort in 1995. The recall failed, and Machado now wants the state to pay his bills.
By Charles Price

40 **Logging towns**
The north coast timber wars have produced casualties all around. But some communities finally are digging out from under the economic ruin.
By Kathleen Dougherty

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Upfront umbrage

The right phone. According to the *San Francisco Chronicle,* a group of conservative Californians is urging registered Republicans statewide to switch their long-distance phone business to a conservative Christian phone service that has promised to pump 10 percent of its profits into a political-action committee run by former California Republican Assembly President Greg Hardcastle. The PAC, known as the Republican Victory Fund, would receive the cash from AmeriVision of Oklahoma, whose co-founder touts his support for "right-wing, fiscally conservative, fundamentalist, Christian causes," the paper reported last month. The paper also reported that some folks are mighty grumpy over the solicitation — including the Republican National Committee, which is honked off that it uses the committee's official elephant trademark without permission. The committee ought to be concerned. The solicitation not only promotes AmeriVision but trashes phone companies such as AT&T, claiming that the communications giant, among others, gives more generously to Democrats than to Republicans. That's a bit embarrasing to Republicans because AT&T is the largest single contributor tp the party's national convention in San Diego.

Cough it up. Tired of waiting for its money back, Orange County has sued Laurie Campbell, the bogus Democratic candidate recruited by Republicans to run in the Doris Allen recall election last December. Campbell was tossed off the ballot by a Sacramento judge after revelations surfaced that she had falsified her nominating petitions. Campbell signed affidavits on the petitions that she personally had gathered the Democratic voter signatures on those petitions when in fact they had been secured by several GOP operatives. The operatives since have pled guilty to misdemeanor charges, while Campbell, who is cooperating with prosecutors, has yet to be charged. Campbell was removed from the slate *after* the county already had printed its ballots, forcing another printing. Orange wants Campbell to pay for that printing — a bill that totals $41,840. No word on whether Campbell can afford the bill.

Fog over the Potomac. The veep boomlet on behalf of Representative Chris Cox (R-Newport Beach) is beginning to take shape — fueled by, uh, Chris Cox. His Washington office last month dispatched a couple of pages from a recent *Hotline* newsletter that discusses Cox' chances for becoming U.S. Senator Bob Dole's running mate. According to a *Hotline* interview with an editor from *The Washington Times,* Cox would be the best Californian to run with Dole — better than Governor Pete Wilson or Attorney General Dan Lungren. Cox rather than Lungren, insists the *Times,* represents the future of the party — a notion she supported by citing his role in pushing "securities litigation reform" through Congress. Let's see. That's the legislation that mirrored Proposition 201, defeated by California voters 60 percent to 40 percent. Columnist George Will also has touted Cox of late.

Marilyn Moretti, wife of the former Speaker Bob Moretti, unveils a memorial to her late husband in Capitol Park. Moretti, a Democrat, served as speaker 1970 to 1974. Soon he launched an unsuccessful bid for governor. He was defeated in the Democratic primary by then-Secretary of State Jerry Brown. The memorial, financed by friends of Moretti and authorized by the Legislature, is located near the Capitol's east steps, opposite the fish pond.

Big spenders. The conventional wisdom always has dictated that Republicans are stingier than Democrats when it comes to paying taxes. But a recent poll by the Roper organization seems to have punctured that notion. When asked to name the highest percentage of income that would be fair to pay in all taxes combined, Democrats responded with a median of 18 percent. Republicans, on the other hand, responded with a more generous median of 20 percent.

What's in a name? Well, plenty if your moniker is Hall Delano Roosevelt. The grandson of Franklin Delano Roosevelt, Hall is bringing the family name back into California politics — as a candidate for the Long Beach City Council. A marketing executive, the 36-year-old Roosevelt is the son of James Roosevelt, who ran in the 1950 race for governor, losing to then-incumbent Republican Earl Warren.

Where's Pete? The *National Journal* recently wrote a cover story called "Where the action is," and the action referred to was all the good things coming from what the magazine termed "a new breed of pragmatic governors" who get things done. The governors? George Voinovich (Ohio), Mike Leavitt (Utah), John Rowland (Connecticut), George Allen (Virginia), Zell Miller (Georgia), Christine Todd Whitman (New Jersey), Marc Racicot (Montana) and Tommy Thompson (Wisconsin).

"Any politician who asks voters to trust him must be prepared to say forthrightly what he will do with that trust and then stand willingly to be judged on his performance."

— Bob Moretti

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Rostrum letters

Orange County shame

Regarding your "Two Cents" column (see *CJ*, May 1996), Orange County's GOP political machine is so shamelessly corrupt that Assembly Speaker Curt Pringle will never step forward to condemn the illegal actions of those involved in the Doris Allen-Scott Baugh scandal. Pringle has never apologized for hiring uniformed poll guards back in 1988 to harass Santa Ana's Latino voters. Indeed, GOP county chairman Tom Fuentes continues to defend this premeditated assault on the civil rights of Santa Ana voters despite shelling out $400,000 in compensation to the victims. Pringle, Fuentes and most of the other "family-value" leaders in the GOP constabulatory in Orange County are incapable of shame and unable to distinguish right from wrong. The ends always justify the means for these pols; prudence, principle and propriety be damned. So don't expect Pringle to so much as scold those Republican loyalists recently indicted on multiple felony counts, including Assemblyman Baugh. Pringle continues to deny he knew anything about the plot to put Baugh's longtime friend Laurie Campbell on the ballot to dilute the Democratic vote in the Allen recall. Per usual, the OC Republican constabulatory has circled the wagons around Baugh and are shooting from the hip at Republican District Attorney Michael Capizzi. In Baugh's defense, an obviously nervous Dana Rohrabacher lashed out at Capizzi, accusing him of investigatory tactics similar to those practiced in Nazi Germany. Short on shame and ethics, Orange County's Republicans are always long on hyperbole. When caught assaulting the democratic process, hyperbole not apology is their only response.

MARK PETRACCA
UC Irvine

Pat Brown

Jack Burby's tribute to the late Governor Pat Brown (see CJ, April 1996) was well deserved, touching, but also, at times, offensive. Not one, but three disparaging remarks were made about the late President Richard Nixon. There was no need to include unflattering passages about one deceased statesman while honoring another. It is about time that we begin to heed President Bill Clinton's words that were delivered at Mr. Nixon's funeral: "May the day of judging President Nixon on anything less than his entire life and career come to a close." California can be proud of both Pat Brown and Richard Nixon. Let us honor them both.

RICHARD F. LEMIRE
Riverside

CD 38

Your analysis of the 38th Congressional District race (see *CJ*, May 1996) is surprising on several counts. First, you characterized it as "GOP leaning," but in terms of party registration, it is one of the most Democratic in the country to be represented by a Republican. The area was represented by Democrat Glenn Anderson for 24 years prior to his retirement in 1992, and the district voted heavily for President Bill Clinton that same year. Second, your analysis erroneously implies that the main reason that Rick Zbur received the Democratic Party's pre-primary endorsement was because of his sexual orientation. In obtaining that endorsement, Rick received nearly 90 percent of the votes cast at the regional endorsement conference — more than any other candidate in a contested race in the region. Although only a few of the delegates were gay or lesbian, Rick received overwhelming support. The Long Beach gay and lesbian community would be surprised to learn that they have as much influence as your summary implies. Finally, your description of Republican incumbent Steve Horn as a moderate ignores his voting record. In fact, Horn has voted with the Republican leadership on virtually every major vote since the beginning of this Congress — nearly 85 percent of the time.

JEFF FISHER
Campaign Manager
Rick Zbur for Congress

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What futu

Termed out of office in 1998, Pete Wilson must create a legacy of achievement. Otherwise, he simply may be remembered as the unluckiest chief executive in state history. And he may never be known as President Wilson.

by Steve Scott

When recounting the travails of his first five years in office, Governor Pete Wilson is fond of recalling a pre-inauguration lunch he had in 1990 with outgoing Governor George Deukmejian. The lunch, remembers Wilson, began with the state facing a $3 billion deficit. By the time the dishes were cleared, the estimate had been revised to $7 billion. It was, as they say, all downhill from there. Economic depression, natural disasters and budget gaps as large as $14 billion kept Wilson hunkered in survival mode throughout his first term. Although fortune smiled on him long enough to send Kathleen Brown as a re-election opponent in 1994, even his harshest critics would have to concede the point:

Pete Wilson is probably the unluckiest governor in the state's history.

This unprecedented succession of bad breaks has contributed mightily to Wilson's persistent lack of popularity, reaffirmed recently by a Field Poll which showed his presence on the GOP national ticket would cost the party 10 points in California. But bad luck alone can't account for approval ratings that have been, at times, the lowest for any governor since the advent of modern opinion polling. Fair or not, many Californians see Wilson as little more than a dour-faced caretaker in a blue disaster jacket. In a state built by individuals who seized destiny by the reins, the governor's fate always seemed to rest in the hands of others — the Legislature, Congress, the federal administration. Even his most significant achievement to date — controlling the growth of state spending — is tainted in the minds of some by his early advocacy of the largest tax increase in state history. Wilson always seemed to be blaming someone else for his travails, and while the excuses were often valid, they still were just excuses.

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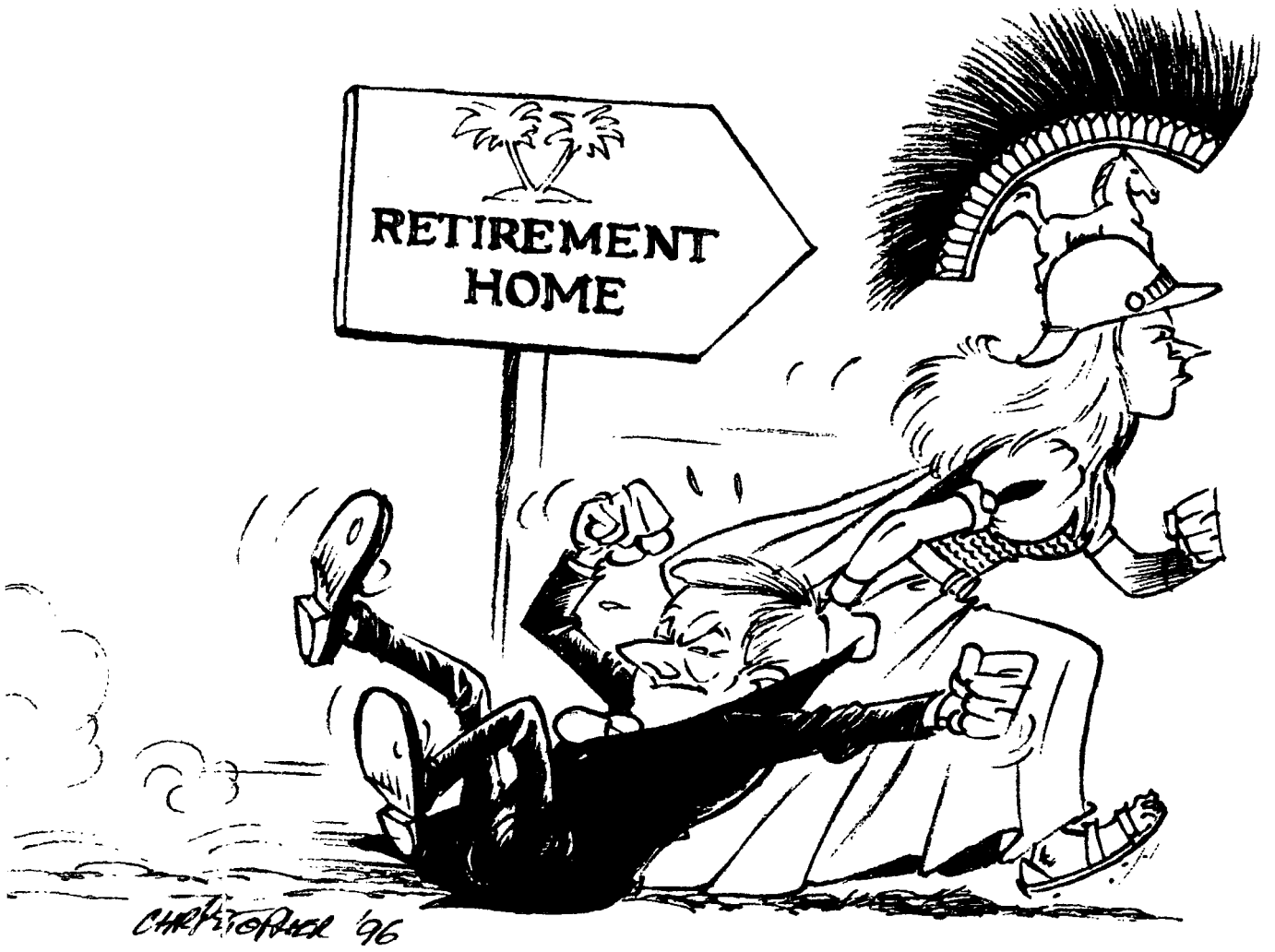
re Pete?



Recently, though, there have been signs to suggest the tide of Wilson's fortunes is finally starting to come in. The state's economy has begun to regain its characteristic dynamism and luster, briskly creating new jobs in the high-tech and entertainment sectors. Crime is down, and California voters were optimistic enough this year to begin passing bond issues again.

The long-overdue arrival of hopeful times presents the governor with an opportunity to make good on the promise that greeted his arrival in Sacramento in 1991. "He spent four years trying to put the state's fiscal house in order," said longtime Wilson aide Dan Schnur, now a public-relations executive. "Now he's finally gotten to a point where he can make real progress on his agenda." What many both in and out of state politics are asking is whether Wilson will seize that opportunity. What is his agenda for the final two years of his time as governor? Will he be able to take control of his own destiny, or will it continue to be controlled by outside forces? How important are the last two years of his term to California's future ... and to his own?

Answering these questions requires an understanding of the unique context in which this two-plus-year drama will be played out. First, there is the issue of term limits. Thanks to 1990's Proposition 140, Wilson will be the first governor in history to face a constitutionally-mandated endpoint to his time as governor.

Hero or villain, saint or sinner, Wilson is out in 1998.

There are many who see that limit as providing a window

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of opportunity for the governor — a chance to follow his heart without worrying about the interest-group pressures which often mess with a politician's head. When Deukmejian voluntarily term-limted himself in 1989 by announcing that he would not seek a third term, he concedes it was, in some ways, a liberating experience.

"When you don't have to consider your decisions in the light of how would this play in the next political campaign, there is a certain amount of relief," said Deukmejian. "You're always trying to do the best you can, but you aren't subjected to as much contact and pressure from interest groups as you might be if you were seeking another term."

As Deukmejian and other second-term governors came to realize, however, there is a price to pay for this opportunity. While most politicians bristle at the mention of the words "lame duck," the fact remains that chief executives on their way out tend to find their influence waning the nearer they get to the end of their term. "As it became apparent that Pete Wilson was going to be my successor, [legislative Democrats] began to refuse to work with us," recalled Deukmejian. "They kept believing ... they could get a better deal from Wilson."

Of course, Deukmejian was somewhat unique among recent governors in that his decision not to run for a third term was, in effect, an announcement of his retirement from public life. A quiet life in the private sector appears to hold no appeal for the ambitious Wilson. While there's an outside chance he might try for the U.S. Senate seat currently held by Democrat Barbara Boxer, most observers see him setting his sights higher. Last year, on the heels of his surprisingly successful re-election bid, Wilson was emboldened to try his hand at presidential politics. The results were calamitous thanks to some self-inflicted wounds and a run of his trademark bad luck. Still, the 1995 debacle left Wilson with a taste for national politics, either as a member of a Bob Dole cabinet or as a presidential candidate himself.

"If Bill Clinton is re-elected, I'd bet a pretty good sum of money that Pete Wilson will run in four years," said Schnur.

So there sits Pete Wilson as he approaches his last two years: term-limited, unpopular, ambitious, helming a state emerging from five years of dark times but still beset with a troubling array of structural and societal maladies. For his next presidential campaign to have a chance of faring better than his last one, many believe Wilson needs to leave more of a legacy than simply being the guy who kept the state from falling into the sea. He needs to post some active policy accomplishments.

"Good government is good politics, and good politics is good government," said GOP political consultant Sal Russo, a veteran of state and national campaigns. "It would be easier if he had a record that he could take and say, 'This is what i'm going to do as president.' I don't think it's a requirement [but] it's easier."

What new initiatives can Californians expect from their governor as his tenure heads into the home stretch? Efforts to secure an interview with Wilson to put that question to him directly were unsuccessful; a spokesman said the administration had only begun the process of mapping out the last two years. By most accounts, though, Wilson has already begun charting his political course by virtue of the issues he has chosen to make his priorities in 1996, as well as the tone of his public utterances.

In terms of his public persona, it sometimes seems as if the presidential campaign hasn't ended. Scarcely a week goes by without some new invective levelled at the Clinton administration over some slight real or perceived. If Clinton doesn't act on a California priority, Wilson blasts the inaction. If some action is taken, Wilson complains that it's not enough. Even when the administration does everything he wants, Wilson still complains, usually that the action wasn't swift enough. The governor's main beef has been the federal government's inability to stem the flow of illegal immigrants across the border. Veteran GOP consultant Tony Quinn says Wilson's focus on federal inaction is just what the doctor ordered, but he warns the governor risks diminishing his credibility by making it a partisan issue.

Pete Wilson

"He cannot make the case that it's only the Democrats' fault that California has all these problems," said Quinn. "The problems were there with the Bush administration."

Wilson's other main political cause has been his crusade against affirmative action. In addition to engineering the University of California Regents' vote to ban affirmative action in admissions and hiring, the governor is the most visible advocate of the anti-affirmative-action California Civil Rights Initiative. Here again, Quinn questions the value of the effort, even though he agrees with the objective. "These initiatives tend to come and go," said Quinn. "Whatever happens to the civil rights initiative won't affect him one way or another."

In terms of specific policy initiatives, Wilson this year has focused on four areas:

• **Tax cuts**. As he has for each of the previous two years, Wilson is

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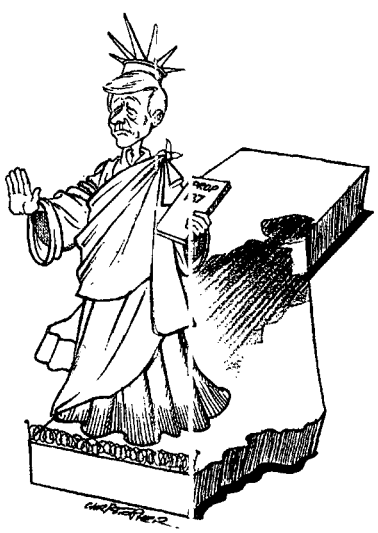
George Deukmejian

again pushing an across-the-board, 15 percent reduction in personal and corporate income taxes. The governor's budget also calls for a range of specific tax and fee breaks for business and industry. The policy justification for this anti-tax fervor is job creation, but Wilson's critics see his proposal as little more than a bid for absolution from conservative Republicans angered by his advocacy of the largest tax increase in the state's history. "He's introduced this tax cut solely to say that the governor who raised taxes is also the governor who cut taxes," said Democratic political consultant David Townsend.

• **Welfare reform**. In the past, Wilson's version of welfare reform was simple — cut benefits. This year, however, the governor has crafted a more complicated approach, aimed, he says, at "eliminating cash benefits." The governor's plan proposes a series of vouchers — for food, housing, job training, and so forth. These benefits would be time-limited, with incentives which he believes will discourage unwed pregnancies and encourage two-parent families. Here again, there is a political prophylaxis at work. Two of his prospective 2000 presidential rivals — Massachusetts Governor William Weld and Wisconsin Governor Tommy Thompson — have substantial welfare reforms to point to in their own states.



• **Education Reform.** Years of trying to chart a center course on education policy have earned Wilson little good will, so he's decided to veer right. Wilson's state of the state message this year included a call for a system of "opportunity scholarships" for students in low-performing schools. Translation: vouchers, only two years after he publicly opposed a school-voucher initiative. Wilson has also joined the conservative attack on the whole-language approach to reading instruction and has called for scrapping the entire state education code.

• **Privatization.** Earlier this year, Wilson unveiled a broad proposal for reshaping and streamlining government services. Large sections of government would be contracted out to the private sector, such as the Department of Motor Vehicles and the State Compensation Insurance Fund. Departments would be consolidated, regulations would be eliminated, and vast quantities of unused state property would be sold off. Much of this is still in the planning stages; so far, the only state department specifically targeted for elimination is the Department of Boating and Waterways. But administration officials insist the effort is serious.

In reviewing what appear to be the governor's priorities, veteran Wilson watchers will notice something conspicuously absent. It seems that, for now, the pragmatic, pro-government, preventive Pete who bounced into office in 1991 is gone. Sadder and wiser, Wilson's focus on privatization can be seen as evidence that Wilson has joined other conservatives in believing that government is more a part of the problem than a part of the solution. Some of his preventive programs did make it into law, but they don't get the time or attention he devotes to tax cuts or Clinton bashing.

Democrats have complained about the newer, nastier Wilson for some time. "We thought he represented a return to the sort of progressive type of Republicans we've had in the past," said Senate President pro Tempore Bill Lockyer (D-Hayward). "It didn't work out that way."

But even Wilson's staunchest defenders now concede he is not necessarily the same man he was when he took office. "I don't think it's possible to go through what he's been through and not be changed by it," said Schnur. "People who live through war, or survive some natural calamity, are fundamentally changed by their experiences. In a broader sense, that's what's happened to California, and more specifically, it's what's happened to Pete Wilson."

This tough tone likely will complicate Wilson's relationship with the Legislature as currently constructed; in other words, with Lockyer's Democrats in control of the Senate. Although he has, at times, worked with Democratic leaders to accomplish mutual goals, Wilson is more often confrontational. Even this year, with the state's economy and fiscal situation improving, Wilson is still warning of "a long and unpleasant summer" of budget negotiations. "He's still caught up in the general Republican theme of 'government as the enemy,'" said Lockyer. "As long as that's your fundamental philosophy, it's not likely you'll use government to solve problems."

This prickly relationship with Democrats leaves Wilson no choice but to pull out all the stops this year in pursuit of GOP majorities in both houses of the Legislature. Deukmejian believes the November legislative elections "will be critically important to his ability to accomplish anything in his last two years." Already, the governor has suffered a setback in his quest for a Republican Senate, as his hand-picked candidate for a special election in the Silicon Valley was defeated. But Wilson is still holding out hope and is constantly pushing Republican presidential nominee Bob Dole to campaign vigorously in the state this fall.

In the final analysis, though, even a full Republican house in Sacramento is no guarantee that Wilson will be able to pad his presidential resume. The governor's relationship with GOP conservatives has always been prickly, as was evidenced again this past month when GOP lawmakers scotched his teen-pregnancy initiatives in an Assembly fiscal subcommittee. Wilson can expect more such snubs in the future, especially if Attorney General Dan Lungren begins to assert his position as the presumptive GOP gubernatorial nominee in 1998.

"Historically, a governor's last two years have been their worst two years," said Quinn. "No governor in recent times has been able to reverse what begins to be a bad run of luck."

Bad luck ... just what Pete Wilson needs.

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The Bottom Line

government finance

by Susan Rasky

Statistics and welfare reform

Last month, thousands of married California women who have chosen to retain their maiden names learned that the state, lacking more sophisticated counting methods, categorizes their offspring as part of an "epidemic" of out-of-wedlock births. Disconcerting or amusing as that revelation may be for the families involved (including the editor of *California Journal*), it should raise some troubling questions about what passes for information in our seemingly endless national debate over welfare reform. What other statistical mirages and cultural fads or fairy tales are driving policy decisions on, say, time-limited benefits, workfare programs, job training and that venerable scourge of decent society — teen pregnancy?

Data on welfare recipients, particularly those who receive benefits under the Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) program abound. Few other societal groups are the subject of more routine and detailed scrutiny as to income, education, child-bearing patterns, health outcomes and the like. A study by the Institute for Women's Policy Research in Washington, D.C., for example, has attempted to categorize factors that increase the likelihood of an AFDC recipient obtaining paid employment. The sheer simplicity and common logic of some of the findings should give pause to any would-be architect of welfare reform. Among the most arresting:

- Women who do not have a work-preventing disability have a 20 percent probability of obtaining employment, compared with women who are disabled, for whom the probability is 3 percent;
- Women who do not have infants or toddlers have a 20 percent probability of obtaining employment, compared with women with very young children, for whom the probability is 8 percent;
- Women who live in states with lower unemployment rates have a better chance of working than those who live in states with higher jobless levels.

The problem here is that for all the studies and demonstration projects and pilot programs undertaken in the name of welfare reform, the one thing researchers are unable to provide is the statistical proof that there is a simple, inexpensive way to make welfare mothers self-sufficient over the long term. Even the much-vaunted job-training program in Riverside County offers little real hope that schemes designed to push welfare mothers quickly into the job market do much to keep them there.

Evaluations of women who participated in the Riverside GAIN program show that, three years out, only 14 percent are earning more than $10,000 a year and only 23 percent remain off welfare. From such statistical uncertainty grows policy mischief. Last year, time limits; this year, state bloc grants; and who knows? Perhaps next year, chastity belts.

The policy *du jour* — bloc grants that would end the federal entitlement to welfare and allocate a fixed amount of federal dollars to states to disperse as they wish — hangs somewhere in election-year limbo. Since Governor Pete Wilson's proposals for revamping the California welfare system largely are contingent on what happens in Washington, it may be that welfare reform stalls altogether this year. Worse things could happen.

On the other hand, Wilson could choose to follow the strategy adopted by some of his fellow Republican governors in seeking federal waivers to experiment with selected pieces of welfare reform. California is one of 29 states that already have applied to Washington for waivers to establish time-limited benefit programs that permit continued assistance for recipients who participate in a work program. But Wilson's more ambitious plans would require additional waiver applications that may or may not pass muster with the Clinton administration, not to mention the thorny problem of making it through the Legislature.

Welfare by waiver lacks the political bang of wholesale overhaul, and of course it maintains the entitlement status of the benefits. While that's been good enough for conservative GOP governors like John Engler of Michigan, Jim Edgar of Illinois and Tommy Thompson of Wisconsin, Pete Wilson tends to prefer cursing the Democratic darkness rather than lighting Republican candles. The social-science researchers don't have a good take yet on which experimental programs in those Midwestern states really do work, but even the most cursory comparisons between what other states have tried and what California thinks it might want to do are instructive.

In Wisconsin, experiments with time-limited benefits have involved only two counties — neither the large population centers of Madison or Milwaukee. The state has requested waiver authority to expand the experiments, but the expansions include a guaranteed work slot at the time the benefit limit is reached, and the proposed program does not involve grant reductions. In Michigan, where the most dramatic welfare change has been the elimination of general assistance — a program that does not involve AFDC recipients — Engler has not sought time limits for the AFDC and has said he opposes them. In Illinois, time limits apply only to 9 percent of AFDC caseload and no grant reductions have been made. Of the 15 states that have requested federal waivers to permit termination of benefits after a specific time period, all would allow extensions on these limits if the recipients demonstrated a good-faith effort to obtain work and could not. California contemplates no such flexibility and thus California is the only state that envisions a system involving no job guarantee, no time extension on benefit limits and grant reductions.

Someday a learned scholar, preferably one who understands theology, will come along and explain the American cultural obsession with overhauling the welfare system. Meanwhile, Californians would do well to pray for legislative gridlock.

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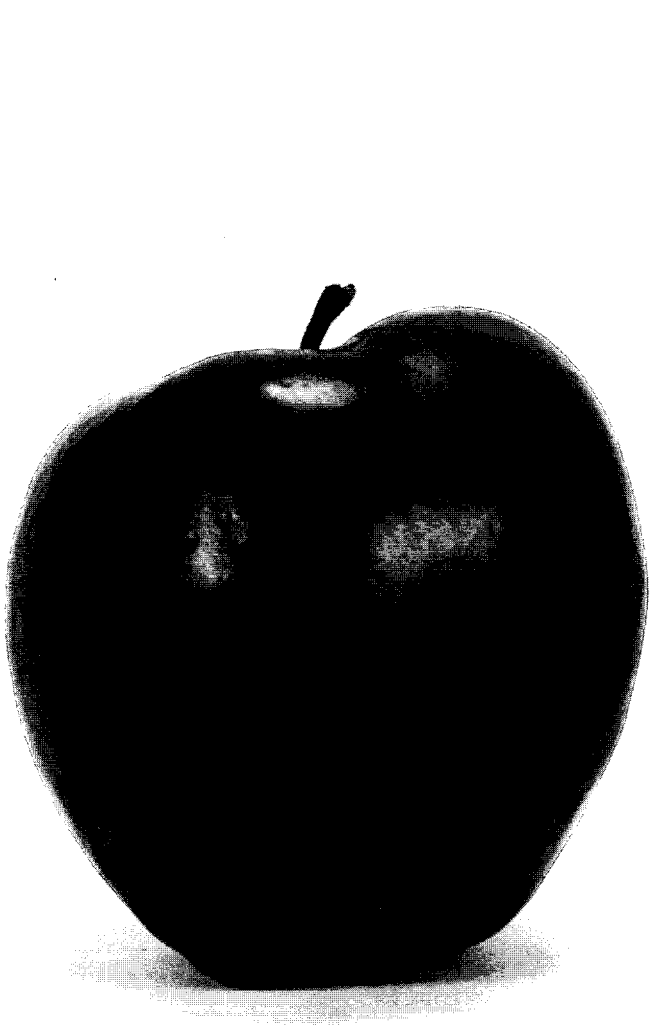
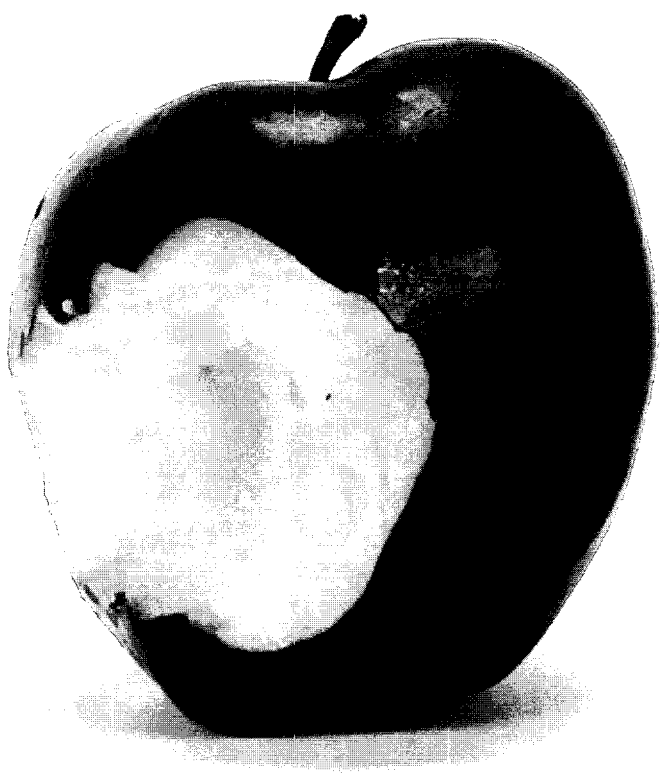
back to

When the subject is education and schools, the debate is a Babel of conflicting expertise, statistics, prejudices and preconceived notions. Lost in the debate are the most elemental questions: Why do we send our children to school, and what do we expect them to learn?





Photos by Rich Pedroncelli

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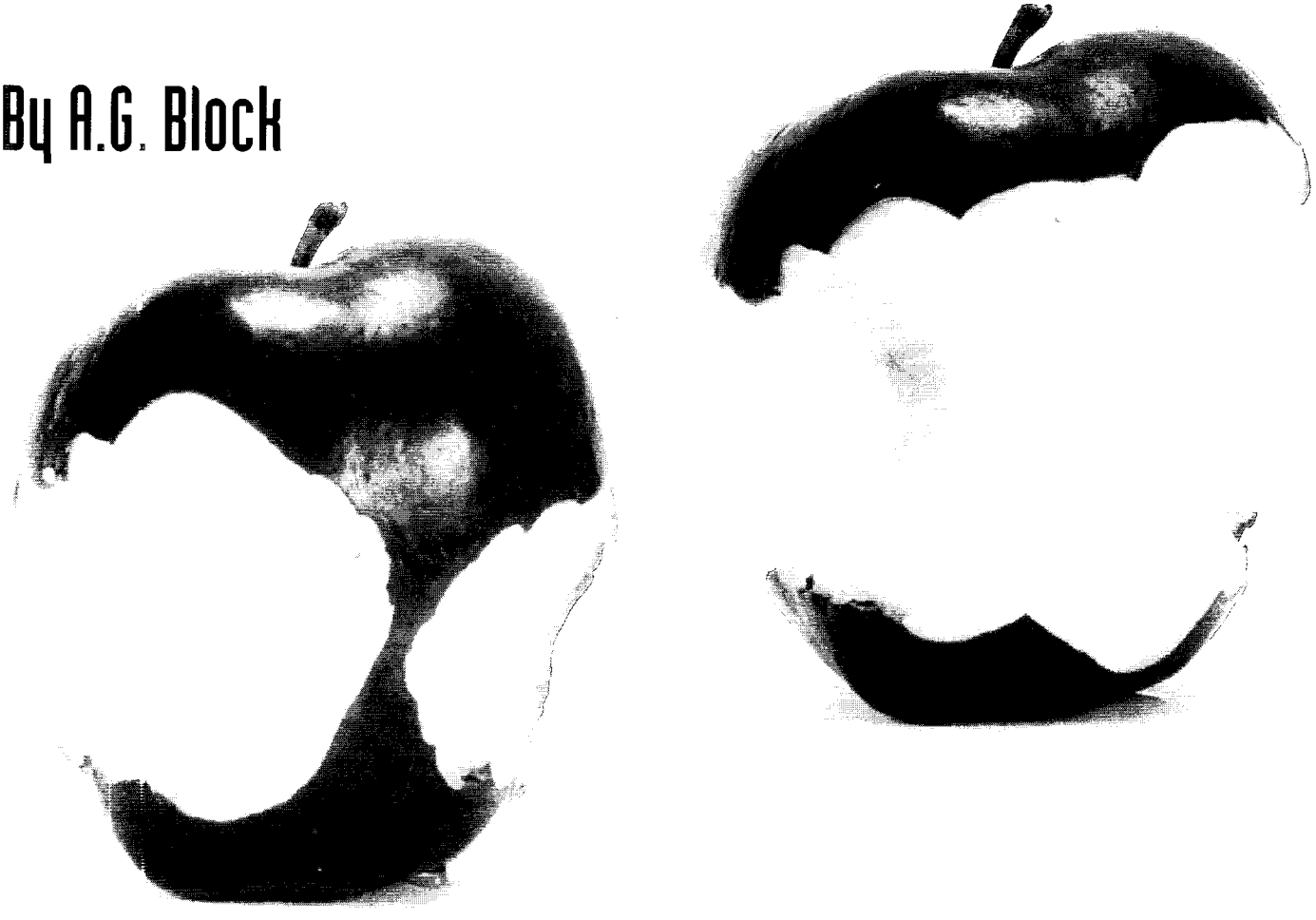
basics

By A.G. Block



"Why should my son be a scholar when it is not intended that he should live by his learning?" asked satirist Jonathan Swift in an 18th Century essay on education. "By this rule, if what is commonly said be true, that money answers all things, why should my son be honest, temperate, just, or charitable, since he hath no intention to depend upon any of these qualities for a maintenance?"

Swift's taunting question was designed to mock the families of wealth, whose offspring often ended up squandering the ancestral fortune in a lifetime of sloth and idleness. But his barb serves to illustrate, in terse relief, those elements of an education that exist beyond the three "r's."

Controversies gripping the education community today would amuse Swift, for they seem to have little to do with the results of schooling and scholarship. These arguments have seethed for years over issues such as vouchers, assessment tests, funding, block schedules, charter schools, state and federal control, school bonds, integration, busing versus neighborhood schools, Eurocentric versus ethnocentric curricula, new math versus old math, whole language arts versus phonics, class size versus teacher salaries, *ad nauseum*. However important these issues, the noise they create overshadows some real basics: why we send our children to school in the first place and what we expect our schools to teach them.

To this end, Neil Postman, chairman of the Department of Culture and Communication at New York University, painted a broad stroke in his new book "The End of Education" when he wrote:

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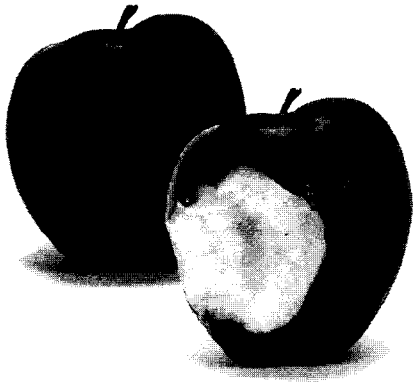

Schools are the affirmative answer to the question: Can a coherent, stable, unified culture be created out of people of diverse traditions, languages and religions?

— Neil Postman

"At its best, schooling can be about how to make a life, which is quite different from how to make a living." To Postman and others, we educate children for a variety of reasons, all important but all in competition for the limited time and resources allocated to schools.

Basically, schools prepare children for jobs and careers, to be involved citizens and for a lifetime of learning. Finally, and perhaps most important for California, schools provide children with a common meeting place in which to learn common values. As such, schools are the crucible where Americans are made and where children discover a heritage grown from a myriad of diverse cultures. How this is accomplished, however, is the grist for controversy.

Thomas De Quincey, a 19th Century English philosopher, suggested that there are but two kinds of literature: that of knowledge and that of power. By "literature," he meant everything, including poetry, sermons, speeches, writings, novels, textbooks, scientific tracts, encyclopedias and almanacs of data. The literature of knowledge is meant to impart information or ideas but often is ephemeral, changing as new information comes to light. The literature of power, on the other hand, is designed to move and is more likely to be eternal.

To illustrate, a 1930s history textbook taught students about, among other things, the Reconstruction era that followed the Civil War. This "literature of knowledge" faded from view, however, as new facts were unearthed and different ideas emerged. But the "literature of power," as embodied in W.E.B. DuBois' robust 1935 essay "The Propaganda of History," remains as inspirational today as when first written to discredit accepted views of Reconstruction and to celebrate what he termed the "magnificent drama" of slavery and the resurrection of an entire race.

To De Quincey, therefore, an education system was effective when knowledge and power were woven together to form a tapestry of learning.

Clearly, however, schools must give students the knowledge necessary to earn a living and to enter society. "Kids need to have the skills and abilities that allow them to compete, to earn a wage, and support a family," says Maureen DiMarco, secretary of Child Development and Education in the Wilson administration. Those skills include the ability to read and write, to calculate and perform higher math, and to have some understanding of the sciences.

Historically, the country moved away from the notion of church schools during the mid-19th Century precisely because of the demand for a more skilled workforce. "In 1865, we were coming off a civil war, and half the country was bankrupt and the other half was in ruins," says Superintendent of Public Instruction Delaine Eastin. "Yet by the turn of the century, we were the number-one manufacturing nation on earth, and many economists believe this happened because we had compulsory public education. ...In the information age, education has an even more important role because workers have to use complicated skills." If we don't impart those skills to our children, Eastin warns, jobs and wealth will go elsewhere.

But in a world where it is estimated that students will have as many as nine different jobs over the course of a lifetime, career preparation means something different than it did 50 or 100 years ago. Consider, for instance, this passage from Mark Twain's "Life on the Mississippi," one of the great literary studies of education.

"If you take the longest street in New York," Twain wrote, and commit to memory every cobblestone, lamppost, building, sign and street crossings, and then add to that the knowledge of the depth of mud at every spot along that street "so accurately that you can instantly [identify where you are] when you are set down at random in that street on an inky black night, you will then have a tolerable notion" of what a Mississippi River pilot must learn. But, Twain added, your education will not be complete, not until you can take half the street signs and *change their places* once a month and still know their new positions on a dark night.

Twain attributed this accumulation of knowledge to an acute ability to memorize. But rote learning was meaningless to a pilot cruising a river that changed daily. More important were the tools of learning which allowed that pilot to understand the significance of snags, floating logs, eroding banks and sand bars. "Life on the Mississippi" is a paean to the art of learning, which serves a student in any endeavor.

"We can't just teach things," says DiMarco. "We must also teach ... attack skills. The ability to learn how to learn is far more important than preparing a

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student for a specific career."

But if schools only taught job skills, this would be a nation of drones. Nor would it long be a democracy. Therefore, schools also must prepare students to be informed citizens — a role that Thomas Jefferson considered paramount.

"In every government on earth," Jefferson wrote in his "Notes on the State of Virginia" in 1781, "is some trace of human weakness, some germ of corruption and degeneracy. ...Every government degenerates when trusted to the rulers of the people alone. The people themselves therefore are its only safe depositories. And to render even them safe, their minds must be improved to a certain degree."

Jefferson wanted people educated as a guard against tyranny, but others also see citizenship as a combination of responsibility and pride in a uniquely American heritage. "We must [inculcate] our students to the great principles of our nation and our founding documents," says Assemblyman Steve Baldwin (R-El Cajon), chairman of the Assembly Education Committee. "We must teach students what made America what it is." Baldwin emphasizes teaching about our basic system of government and justice, but he also stresses teaching aspects of the American character such as independence and self-reliance.

Good citizenship also evolves from a sense of duty, something Benjamin Franklin understood when he urged the study of why governments are formed, and that youth be steeped in "the advantages of liberty, the mischiefs of licentiousness, benefits arising out of good laws and a due execution of justice..."

Yet in a place as diverse as California, preparation for jobs and citizenship must be supplemented with an understanding of what is common to all Americans, regardless of background or heritage. According to Postman, "Schools are the affirmative answer to the question: Can a coherent, stable, unified culture be created out of people of diverse traditions, languages and religions?" Schools, Postman insists, "must fashion Americans out of the wretched refuse of teeming shores." To do this, he says, they must teach, among other things, common values: restraint, social responsibility, humility, empathy, tolerance. They also teach the value of sharing, respect, fair play, collaboration, patience and the need to follow rules.

The task is daunting for a state fractured along so many ethnic fault lines. Other places at other times have been faced with educating large numbers of immigrants, but California is unique. It is not, for example, New York at the turn of the 20th Century. True, New York schools once coped with Polish, French, German, Swedish, Russian, Italian, Spanish, Hungarian and a variety of other European tongues. But most of those languages shared a common alphabet and common roots. In addition, most of the children were white. Today, one Orange County school district alone, reports DiMarco, must deal with 89 different languages and dialects — from Russian to Laotian to Mandarin to Spanish to Hindi and points in between. And not all the faces look alike.

Yet mixing that diversity into a single, multinational culture may be the most critical task facing schools. School is the place where the children of those cultures come together, providing an opportunity to foster tolerance and understanding. School also is the place where children first feel as though they are invested in a system common to all.

"It is really important that people think of themselves as Americans and have a stake in society," explains Dr. Diane Ravitch, former U.S. assistant secretary of education in the Bush administration and now a professor at NYU. "And one of the purposes of education up to the 1960s was to engage in assimilation — to make us all Americans."

But the 1990s are not the 1960s. Assimilation is more complicated today, says Ravitch, and schools may be part of the problem. "Schools ... have fallen in love with diversity," she warns, "and this

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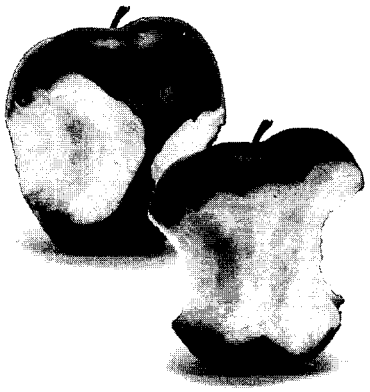

This state is sitting on the richest raw diamond find ever put on this planet. Yet, when we look out, do we see the raw diamond mine? No. We see a field of pointy sharp rocks that make it hard for us to go down our path — we think.

—Maureen DiMarco

... probably heightens racism and the alienation of peoples toward each other. It takes us away from the notion that everyone is part of a common endeavor." Ravitch believes that society — and, therefore, schools — must get back to a time when there were no "hyphenated Americans, just Americans."

That's fine, agrees Eastin, but much of the urge to hyphenate is coming from those who feel that the education system doesn't provide for them. "In the history of this country, there were always people who were excluded, to our regret," she says. "But in the old days, the excluded wanted a world of inclusion. In the future, the excluded will be the least educated, and many of them ... seem to yearn for a world of exclusion." Eastin argues that exclusion — separatism — is the result of anger and frustration on the part of have-nots from all cultures who "have rightfully understood that they cannot participate in the ... information age" without education. "There are the seeds of real trouble."

Children from diverse cultures and backgrounds "often are trying to negotiate two different worlds," explains Morgan Appel, a senior research associate for education at the Claremont Graduate School's Tomas Rivera Center. "The classroom world often does not reflect the home world."

"All children learn, but they learn in different ways," says Senator Diane Watson (D-Los Angeles), who has a doctorate in education. Referring to black children, Watson says that many come from "environments that are highly stimulating. Our children live in areas that are highly depressed ... and violent." Those conditions must be taken into consideration when preparing programs to educate black children, she insists. Otherwise, the risk of alienation spreads.

Appel and Watson especially worry that schools suffer from a lack of teachers from diverse ethnic backgrounds. "If Latino kids, for example, do not see that Latinos are represented among respected adults with authority," Appel says, "it sends a powerful message that not only the school doesn't value the contribution of Latinos, but that the system doesn't value it." He says that message translates to any culture. "Kids need to see their faces represented in that larger face of America."

The task is further complicated by the very idea of teaching common values. "The devil is in the details," says Rick Simpson, principal consultant to the Senate Education Committee. "What exactly are those common values? That's where you begin to see conflicts."

Baldwin, for one, is uncomfortable with the notion that some schools may teach that all cultures are morally equal. "I don't believe they are," he says. "I don't believe that the way women are treated in an Arab culture, where they have to cover themselves, is on the same plane, morally, with the way we treat women in the west."

"It is a challenge to balance respect for other cultures against the real need to have a buy-in to being an American," argues Eastin. "You can teach what values are held by various peoples, and teach kids to respect them, but you better bring it back to what binds us together: equality of opportunity, fairness, liberty and justice."

Can the schools inculcate children with common values and blend cultures in a balanced way — in addition to all of their other duties and mandates?

Most observers insist that schools have no choice. If American society is to move along in harmony, schools must be a salad bowl where all the diverse cultures can be mixed into a cohesive public. "It has long been the public school that has been the institution that has created a sense of a 'public' — that is the principal value of a system of public education," says Julia Koppich, a director at the Policy Analysis for Public Education (PACE) at the University of California, Berkeley. And if that "public" is not created, she warns, "we might as well give up on being a country."

For her part, DiMarco sees great strength in diversity. "This state is sitting on the richest raw diamond find ever put on this planet," she says. "Yet, when we look out, do we see the raw diamond mine? No. We see a field of pointy sharp rocks that make it hard for us to go down our path — we think. But if we only would recognize those diamonds for what they are — something that needs to be polished and placed in the proper setting. As such, they will provide this state with a multicultural work force that will give us the chance ... to dominate the global economy."

But the only way to get to that point, DiMarco says, "is to educate people in the American culture and to circle back to that common ethic and values system. To do that, they must be educated — together."

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Southern Exposure
perspective

by Sherry Bebitch Jeffe

The war over a new superintendent for LAUSD

On a Saturday evening in April, the inaugural game of the Los Angeles Galaxy, debuting major league soccer, was held at Pasadena's Rose Bowl. Planners expected a mere 15,000 people to show up, but, with attendance near the 70,000 mark, the game outdrew opening day at Dodger Stadium — and forced the closure of gridlocked freeway off-ramps. City and law-enforcement officials were taken by surprise. The symbolism was impossible to ignore.

The crowd was estimated to be about 65 percent Latino. There was, reported the *Los Angeles Times*, an entire cheering section from El Salvador. "The event," noted the *Times*, "underscored the new face of Los Angeles."

This unanticipated soccer explosion in Southern California highlighted the shifting demographics and cultural dynamic of the Los Angeles region. It also helped give context to another southland drama: the intense debate surrounding the search for a replacement for Los Angeles Schools Superintendent Sid Thompson. Thompson, the first African-American to hold that post, has announced his resignation when his contract expires in June 1997. And that has forced the school board to address, with far greater urgency than it has before, both the symbolism and reality of the demographic and cultural changes which challenge Southern California.

The Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) is the nation's second-largest and most diverse school district. Its student population is 67 percent Latino, 14 percent African-American, 11 percent Anglo, and 5 percent Asian-American. A group of Latino activists has argued for the immediate appointment of Deputy Superintendent Ruben Zacarias, the district's second-in-command and highest-ranking Latino, to succeed Thompson. Said one, "It's not only about language, it's about culture and [Zacarias] grew up like us. What's it going to take? For us to be 100 percent?"

Other educational leaders have urged going more slowly — taking time to frame the job description and conduct a national search. Among them is School Board member David Tokofsky, who represents the Fifth District, which extends from east of Los Angeles to the northeast San Fernando Valley. It is a district in which Latinos comprise 87 percent of the public school population, almost 70 percent of the total population — and less than 50 percent of the electorate.

Tokofsky, an Anglo teacher who is bilingual, won his seat last year with the help of United Teachers-Los Angeles, the local teachers' union. Tokofsky, some argued, was also aided by a lower turnout in Latino areas likely to support his opponent, Lucia Rivera, than among older white voters likely to support him. He defeated Rivera, a Latino parent backed by school administrators and supported by most of L.A.'s Latino politicians, by only 76 votes. Interestingly, among Rivera's contributors, according to the *Times* was Ruben Zacarias.

Although positioned as a power struggle between teachers and administrators, the election was clearly a fight to preserve and expand Latino political gains. But Tokofsky's election meant the loss of a seat which had been held by a Latino for the past 12 years and which had become the school board's "unofficial clearinghouse" for Latino concerns. For many Latino leaders, that loss was both incredible and unacceptable, leaving only one Latina representative on the seven-member board.

Using language now being heard again, in discussions about selecting the new schools chief, consultant George Pla explained the massing of Latino political support behind Rivera's candidacy: "Not to put down Tokofsky or any other candidate who is not Hispanic, but it's just not the same — the values, the culture, the language, everything. And what's the Latino population of the school district kids?"

Tokofsky has not ruled out hiring Zacarias, but argued "the board needs to set its qualifications and go through some kind of process." To that end, the board last month set up a 14-member advisory panel to advise them on their search for a new superintendent.

Nonetheless, some Latino activists have begun to talk of recalling Tokofsky from office. We've already seen the potential of recall politics to destabilize the state legislative process. If the use of the recall election as a tool for political discipline spreads to the educational policy arena, what will be the impact on the education of California's children?

Whether or not the movement to recall Tokofsky goes beyond rumblings and grumblings, LAUSD is left with the specter of a projected political battle over district leadership. That can only handicap a district already facing the daunting challenges of funding cuts, the impact of Proposition 187, the fight over affirmative action, attacks on bilingual education and the Legislature's easing the process of breaking up the school system into smaller districts. Groups ranging from the San Fernando Valley to South Central Los Angeles are looking at seceding from LAUSD.

At the heart of the debate over Sid Thompson's successor as school chief are critical questions about the future of educational administration in a district — and a state — of increasing diversity and demographic change: Should there be an "ethnic imperative" in choosing leadership? Who should define the rules of the search? How?

Antonio Gonzalez, president of the Southwest Voter Registration Education Project, has observed, "Institutions are slowly, but surely, if sometimes unwillingly, being brought into line with the make-up of the community that they must serve."

How the leadership and the constituencies of the Los Angeles Unified School District confront that reality, and adapt to it, will help shape the ability — and enthusiasm — of its students to navigate the system and to enter the civic and economic life of this state.

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The Faces of Education

A cut-and-save guide to state schools policy-making

By John Borland

Try this sometime: Bring a classroom full of children together and tell them they are about to have the grandest party they have ever imagined. Take a dozen or so aside, and tell each of them individually that he or she has responsibility for planning the bash. Then let 'em rip.

What would you get? Chaos? Welcome to the world of education policy-making in California.

There is no centralized locus for education policy initiatives in or out of state government. In past years, dynamic superintendents of public instruction have been able to mobilize critical-mass coalitions in a general direction. But recent court decisions have taken some of the policy authority away from the superintendent and given it to the appointed state Board of Education. The governor appoints the board, has his own Cabinet-level secretary of child development and education, and free lances on politically hot issues. Both houses of the Legislature conduct their own education initiatives and must jointly pass the multi-billion dollar state education budget. There is the myriad of powerful education associations, teachers unions, individual teachers, administrators and business groups interested in a literate, educated work force. And even those pesky parents pipe up from time to time, wanting a say in what their children are taught.

After weeks of interviewing people close to the process, California Journal has compiled a list of some of the most influential persons and groups in state education policy-making. Such a list can never include all who are involved or interested, and these faces will change with the seasons' political dynamics. But these 18 cards provide a quick look at who currently is setting the direction of the state's public schools.

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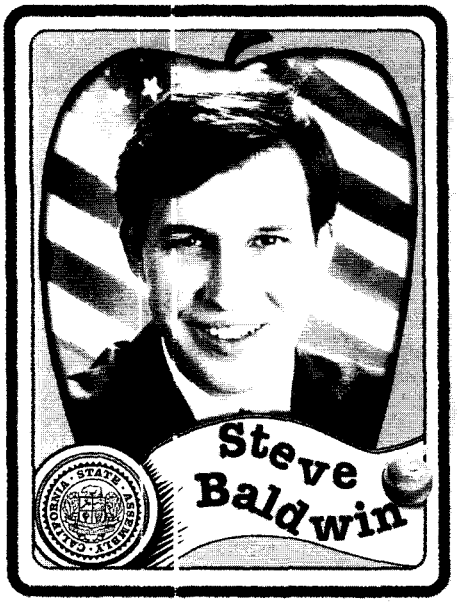

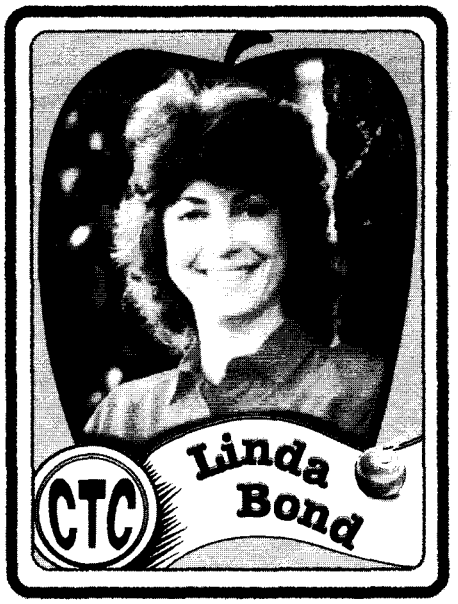

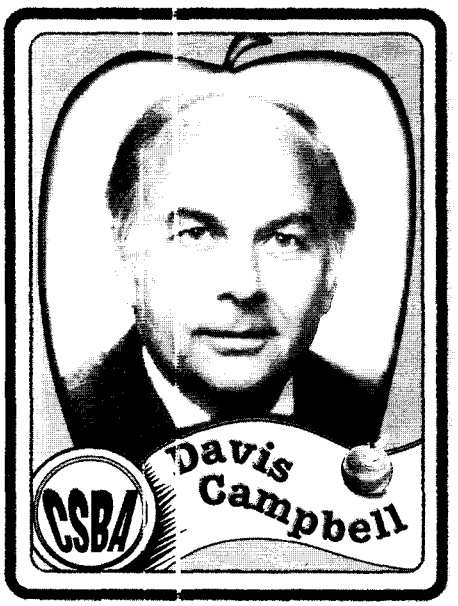

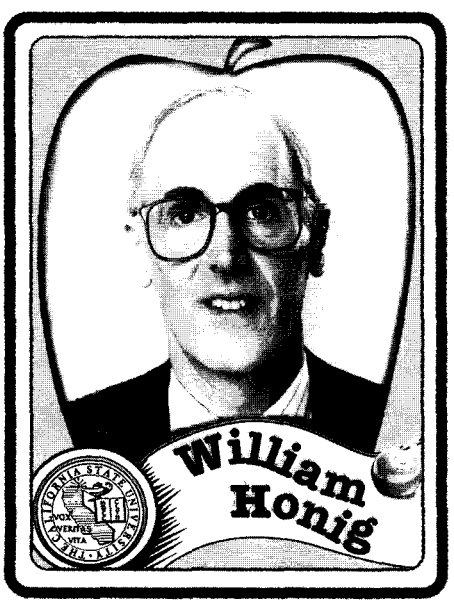

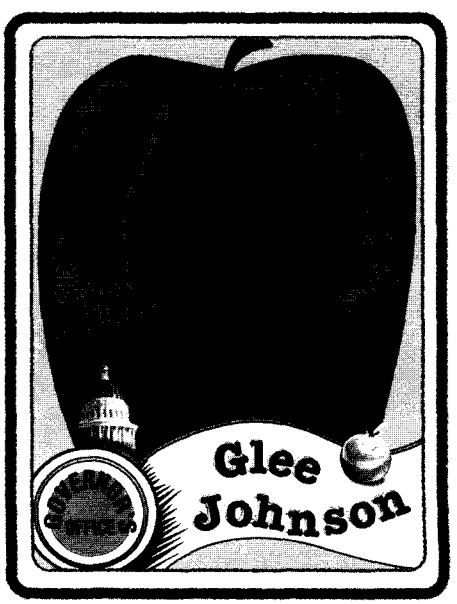

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Linda Bond — Commission on Teacher Credentialing

Bond is officially a consultant to the credentialing commission. But her rank in the state bureaucracy belies her behind-the-scenes influence. The commission has been at the center of charges that new teachers have not learned how to effectively teach children to read; Bond has been instrumental in bringing nationally known education researchers to the state and to Sacramento policy-makers to contrast current teaching methods with the latest research. Bond and the commission were consulted by Governor Pete Wilson on the best way to spend the $100,000-plus included in the 1996-1997 budget for reading and textbooks. Bond also heads, with former Senator Gary Hart, a policy seminar for policy-makers that examines the latest research findings on instructional practices.

Mary Bergan, President, CFT

The California Federation of Teachers, the state AFL-CIO-affiliated teachers union, is overshadowed in Sacramento by the CTA. With substantially fewer members, and subsequently less ability to engage in CTA-style power politics, the Federation tends to take a more conventional lobbying approach than its stick-wielding cousin. But Federation President Bergan commands a respect that goes beyond the strict reach of her organization's influence. She served as the CFT's first full-time Sacramento lobbyist, beginning as legislative director in 1972, and has been at the center of education policy-making since. Long a key figure in discussions of state education finance, student assessment and teacher credentialing, she has used her experience and institutional knowledge to boost her organization's policy leverage.

Steve Baldwin — Chair, Assembly Education Committee

Baldwin took over the chair of the Assembly's Education Committee from Democrat Dede Alpert early this year, after the GOP solidified its hold on the Legislature's lower house. The committee has since moved toward issues on the margin of education policy-making, according to some veterans in the field. But others praise Baldwin's strong advocacy of basic skills and standards, concepts strongly supported by both left and right. The split-house tension between Senate Democrats and Assembly Republicans may perversely have helped Baldwin, forcing him to focus on some center-grounded, bipartisan issues at the expense of more extreme proposals.

Delaine Eastin — Supt. of Public Instruction

Four-term Assemblywoman Eastin won election to the state's nominally highest education post in 1994. But the job is not what it used to be, thanks to recent court decisions ceding much of its policy-making power to the Board of Education, and to the fact that the state school budget is determined by the Legislature and governor. Hounded on all sides by traditional political adversaries and factions within the intensely political education community, Eastin nevertheless has been one of the few voices consistently pushing school reform over the past year. Her proposed "Challenge" program, asking schools to voluntarily raise standards, depends on uncertain legislative action but has won the backing of many in the education community.

Maureen DiMarco — Secy. of Child Development and Educ.

DiMarco occupies an odd position in Sacramento politics. A Democrat and former president of the state School Boards Association, she was appointed by Governor Pete Wilson to fill his newly created Cabinet-level position as secretary of child development and education in 1991, ostensible proof positive of the governor's commitment to education issues. But the governor has not made education his top priority, and many observers say DiMarco has lost some of the influence she once may have had in the executive office. Part of this may be attributable to her failed 1994 bid for state superintendent of public instruction. Or it may simply be that despite her Garden Grove roots and historical support for Wilson, a governor looking for conservative political support can not afford to be too close to a Democrat on education issues.

Davis Campbell —Executive Director, CSBA

A former Department of Education deputy superintendent and private education consultant, California School Boards Association Executive Director Campbell has been working with Sacramento education policy-makers for more than 29 years. Campbell's group, representing the governing bodies of 700 state school districts, has considerable clout inside the Capitol.The group occasionally goes head-to-head with the powerful teachers unions, but both are part of the coalition of groups perpetually fighting for greater education dollars. Outside Sacramento, the CSBA helps mold district policies and provides collective bargaining and legal assistance to individual school boards. Campbell's experience and institutional knowledge help to give his organization's voice substantial weight.

Glee Johnson — governor's education adviser

Further complicating the lines of influence inside the Capitol, Johnson is said by many to be Governor Pete Wilson's closest education adviser. A former legislative aide who spent four years advising GOP Senator Ken Maddy (R-Fresno) on school issues, Johnson moved to Maureen DiMarco's office in 1991, and from there to the governor's staff. She represents Wilson in education budget negotiations and, according to several insiders, appears to have his ear on other key education policy items. Her role is almost entirely behind the scenes; on most public issues, Secretary of Child Development DiMarco speaks for the administration. But insiders point to several key issues where Johnson and DiMarco have differed, and Wilson apparently followed Johnson's advice. Johnson could not be reached for this article.

Bill Honig — former Superintendent of Public Instruction

As superintendent of public instruction between 1982 and 1993, Honig spearheaded a wide-ranging list of school reforms in the late 1980s before being driven from office under conflict-of-interest charges. Portions of the Honig-era reforms, particularly in the areas of reading and mathematics instruction, have since proven to have had near-disastrous results. Honig, now a San Francisco State University professor, has become one of a small group of vocal advocates for a return to basic-skills instruction. His public *mea culpa*, along with his work helping schools and school districts revamp their reading curriculums, has provided Nixon-in-China-like cover for those unwilling to relinquish their hold on the last decade's curriculum reforms.

State Board of Education — the policy-makers

In the fractured world of state education policy making, the governor-appointed state Board of Education is the de facto policy-making board for state schools. The nine-member board approves curriculum for school districts, gives policy waivers for districts and schools that want to strike out in different directions, approves and adopts any statewide testing plan, and oversees the development of the frameworks that determine long-range school policy. Several board members, including Kathryn Dronenburg, Jerry Hume and board President Marion McDowell, are cited by many in the education community as being particularly active and interested, thus wielding more than their share of influence on the board.

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PACE — education think tank

Headed by directors Michael Kirst of Stanford University, Julia Koppich of the University of California, Berkeley, and the Sacramento-based Gerald Hayward, Policy Analysis for California Education (PACE) is one of the most influential education think tanks in the state. The group produces periodic reports on the overall state of schools and instruction, as well as occasional papers on specific issues in education finance, student assessment, instruction practices and other key policy areas. A recent PACE report took a statewide poll to determine voters' feelings on a wide range of education issues. The group also holds policy conferences, and seminars, and conducts individual briefings for state policymakers and staff on education issues.

John Mockler — education lobbyist

Mockler has been on Sacramento's education playing field as long as anyone. He counts 32 budgets that he has helped guide through to completion, either working as a legislative aide, inside a state agency, or as a private policy consultant. His influential Strategic Education Services lobbying firm counts the mammoth Los Angeles Unified School District among its clients — but his influence stems as much from his institutional knowledge and his years of accumulated acumen as his current client list. Mockler is one of the elite few that sits in on final education budget negotiations and is rarely far from any significant policy discussion. He is respected and consulted by both Republicans and Democrats, and is on every short list of key Capitol figures.

Bill Lockyer — Senate President pro Tempore

Lockyer does not directly oversee education issues and serves on no education-related committee. But, as one insider said, with the departure of Willie Brown Jr. from the Assembly, the Senate president pro Tempore has become the single person education interests seek out when they want something. Lockyer controls assignments to the Senate Education Committee, thus indirectly shaping its decisions. He is the only veteran legislative member of the crucial "Big 5" group of budget negotiators, and is majority leader in the house where the education budget negotiations are focused. And he has been cast as the Legislature's lead advocate for Democratic constituencies — which traditionally include education — against the conservative GOP-led Assembly.

Teachers — the front-line troops

Classroom teachers are the individuals who ultimately have the most daily influence over students. Though subject to the curricular winds and whims of state and district administrators, they are the only ones who can interpret what their students each need, and who must craft lessons for best effect. The five instructors recently chosen as "Teachers of Year" — Whittier's Javier Gonzalez, Bellflower's Cedric Anderson, Agoura Hills' Sandra Fleishman, Hanford's Emma Glover, and Arcata's John McGuire — all stood out as giving an exceptional amount of time, energy and creativity to this endeavor. Money, books, and whatever curriculum is currently in vogue can all help lead students to the banks of knowledge. But it takes a good teacher to whet their thirst.

Rick Simpson — Senate policy analyst

Senate Education Committee consultant Simpson makes virtually every short list of key ed-wonks. Until last year the education adviser to Assembly Speaker Willie Brown Jr., and a consultant to Assembly Education for seven years before that, he is one of the most experienced and knowledgeable capitol denizens on education issues. He is one of the few who help hash out the final multi billion-dollar education budget compromises, and one of the handful of people who must sign off on a major policy initiative before it clears the Democrat-controlled Senate. Democratic Senator Leroy Greene is currently Simpson's boss as chair of the Senate Education Committee but is term-limited out in two years. Simpson also serves on the Sacramento County Board of Education.

Mike Roos — President and CEO of LEARN

Roos was a high-ranking Democratic assemblyman until 1991, when he left the Legislature to head the nascent Los Angeles Educational Alliance for Restructuring Now, or LEARN. An alliance of business and community interests, LEARN drafted a reform plan for the troubled Los Angeles Unified School District, featuring greater self-control for individual schools, increased parent involvement and the implementation of on-site social services, among other proposals. Since the district adopted the outline in 1993, LEARN has grown from an initial 30 schools to 298 — almost half of the huge Los Angeles district — with plans to include all district schools by the end of the decade. Recent test results showed LEARN students averaging no better than other district schools, fueling some criticism of the program.

John Walton — voucher financier

Walton is an heir to Wal-Mart billionaire Sam Walton and, though not an active participant in the family business, remains a chief stockholder. He thus has a checkbook the size of a small planet. One of his deepest interests is education reform, with a conservative bent that led him to contribute heavily to 1993's failed Proposition 174 school voucher initiative. He is a member of a successor group planning another voucher initiative for November 1998. Walton also is part of a group called "Taxpayers for A Better Education PAC" that has brought together such unlikely allies as Assemblyman Steve Baldwin, traditional-values guru Lou Sheldon and former CTA powerhouse Alice Huffman. While not engaged in policy-making, what Walton does — or chooses not to do — influences those who are.

Ray Tolleson — superintendent of the year

Tolleson, the superintendent of San Juan Unified School District in suburban Sacramento, represents the local influence wielded by superintendents around the state. As the chief executive officer of school district, superintendents are responsible for setting policy direction and bringing it in front of the elected school board. A dynamic superintendent can lead a district to high achievement and national recognition. A weak leader, or one at odds with the local board, can lead to crippling drift and indecision, as evidenced by the chaos in the Sacramento City Unified District. Tolleson's district was recently selected by *Money* magazine as one of the top school districts in the country.

Lois Tinson — President, CTA

The California Teachers Association wields an enormous influence both inside and outside the Capitol. The largest teachers' union in the state, its financial resources and willingness to contribute time and money to political campaigns give the organization substantial sway in the Legislature, particularly among Democrats. The union has lobbied successfully over the years for increases in education dollars, and then on the district level makes sure that much of the funds go into teacher salaries and benefits. Tinson is CTA president, having moved up to the post after four years as secretary and treasurer of the organization. Others in the organization are also extremely influential, however, including Sacramento Governmental Relations chief John Hine and lobbyist Owen Waters.

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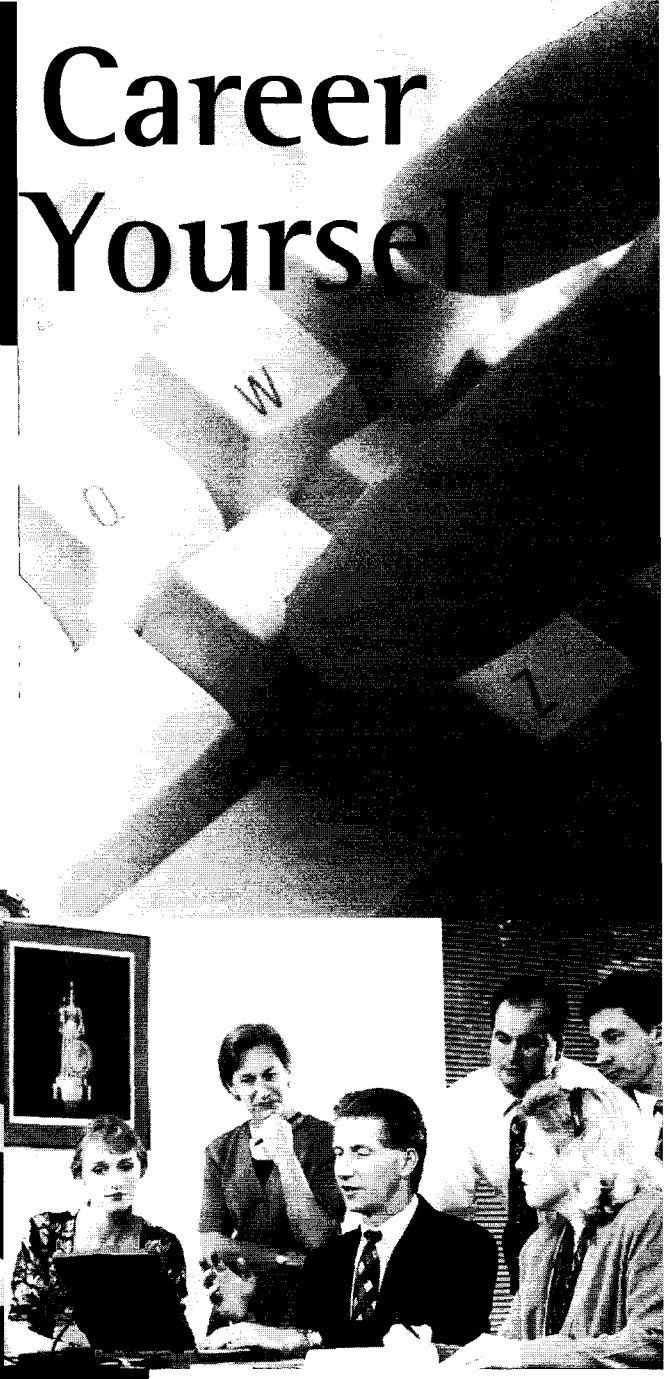

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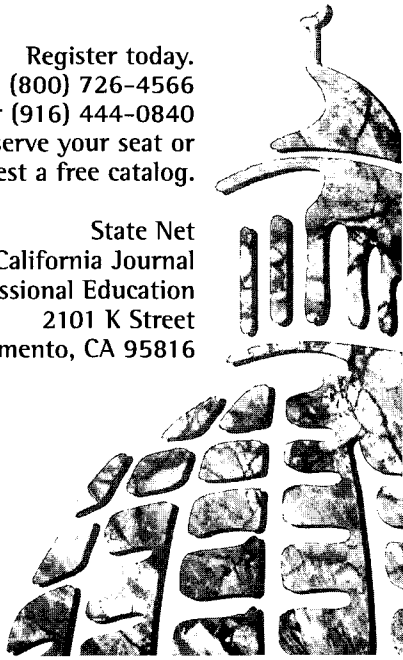

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Grading the

A decade after California revamped its education frameworks, the results are a mixed bag of moderate success and spectacular failure. And the man who spearheaded the revamping spends much of his time crusading for change.

By Lynelle Jolley

Bill Honig rocketed into the state's consciousness in 1982 when the peripetatic San Franciscan was elected state superintendent of public instruction, and his arrival coincided with calls for education reform being sounded nationwide. Only a few months after Honig took office in January 1983, the National Commission on Excellence in Education released a study with the alarming title, "A Nation At Risk: the Imperative for Educational Reform." The April 1993 report promoted what it called "higher order" learning, which basically called for students in kindergarten through grade 12 (K-12) to work harder and achieve higher standards.

"Higher order" became the theme of Honig's 10-year tenure as superintendent, and while he was not the only elected official in California to champion this notion, he became its most vociferous cheerleader. Consequently, much of the credit — and blame — for the current state of education in California falls to Honig.

The so-called "Honig reforms" have produced a mixed bag of results, but one facet of it has been much in the news of late — reading comprehension. And the news for California has been all bad. As a result, the flap over reading has overshadowed other, more positive developments.

Still, the news about reading is horrendous. According to the latest national scores reported by the U.S. Department of Education, California's fourth-graders rank at the bottom, with Louisiana and Guam, in reading — a subject area that Honig argued was the key to achieving the reform movement's goals. Most experts attribute California's decline to the shift in teaching strategy that took hold after the state Board of Education adopted new guidelines in 1987 for reading instruction. Known as the English language-arts framework, this policy document — like frameworks adopted by the state for eight academic areas — guides curriculum, teacher training, testing and textbook acquisition so that all parts of the system work in sync. The language-arts framework emphasized the use of great works of literature in teaching kids to read, which Honig and other reformers felt should be part of the return to a traditional curriculum. Little mention was made of instruction in basic skills, including phonics and spelling, which fell by the wayside

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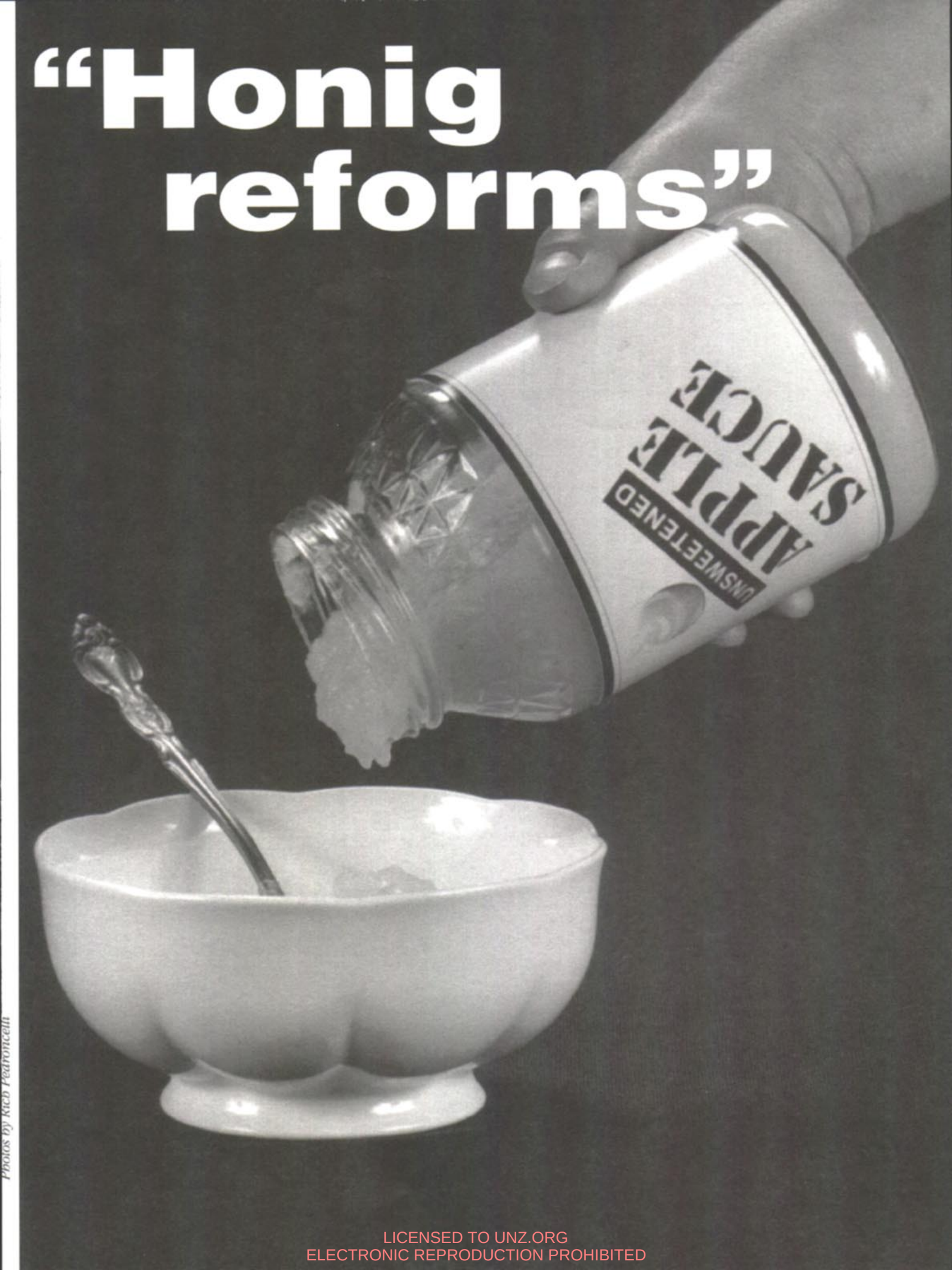
"Honig reforms"



Photos by Rich Pedroncelli

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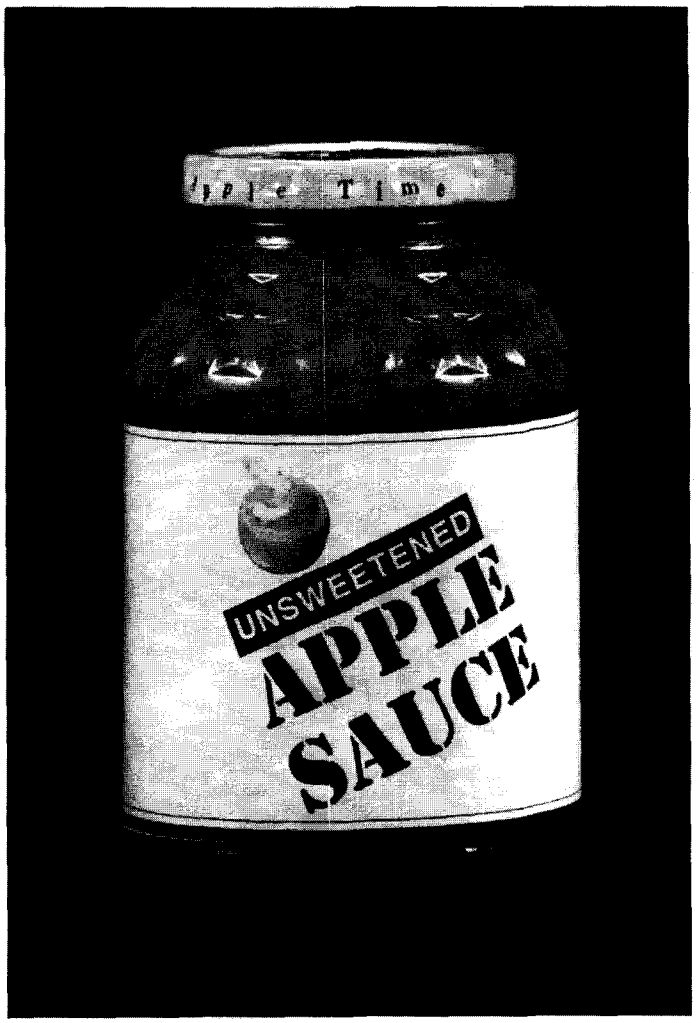
(see story, below).

"It was the single most-damaging education reform effort in the history of the state ... and it may have overwhelmed the good of all of the rest," says John Mockler, a longtime education lobbyist who opposed the framework when it was first proposed. "The state should've required scientific evidence that [it] worked before subjecting the entire state's student population to this experiment."

Honig argues that the framework was misunderstood and ill-applied. In a recent joint hearing before the Assembly Education Committee and the State Board of Education, Honig blamed himself for not being forceful enough in insisting that instruction in basic skills continue to be taught hand-in-hand with literature. That also was the conclusion of task forces created by the current superintendent, Delaine Eastin, to review the language arts and math frameworks. The task forces, however, also found that the original documents were not clear about the importance of balancing basic skills, creative thinking and problem-solving. Math scores of California fourth-graders show a decline as well; the state finished just five spots from the bottom in the last national comparison.

While there continue to be calls at the national level to require students to take tougher classes — the National Governors' Association recently urged adoption of higher academic goals for

Reading policy reform lurches to consensus



There is more than a little irony in the fact that the superintendent of public instruction's office, the single nonpartisan statewide elected position, is one of the most intensely political arenas in state government. Never has this been more true than during the last year's effort to turn around state schools' ineffective reading programs, when the superintendent's Department of Education was beset by traditional education allies, harried by conservative critics, and even torn along painful internal fracture lines.

The "whole language"-based programs adopted by most state schools in the late 1980s had postulated that children would learn to read better, and be more interested in reading, if exposed to real literature and less rote spelling and memorization. Following what they believed to be the guidance of the Department of Education's 1986 reading framework, state schools plunged wholeheartedly into this curriculum, often to the near-complete exclusion of instruction in basic spelling and phonics skills.

But widespread 1993 and 1994 testing of California grade-school students showed that the decade of reading reforms had left huge numbers of children unable to read proficiently. The revelations sparked widespread breast-beating and a bipartisan legislative move towards reinstating basic reading instruction techniques in the schools. Superintendent of Public Instruction Delaine Eastin commissioned a high-profile reading task force, and when it

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elementary and secondary school students within the next two years — California under Honig was ahead of the curve in implementing a more rigorous curriculum. By pushing to rid schools of such lightweight courses as "heroines of the silent screen" and "bachelor survival" and replace them with courses in the humanities, natural sciences and math, he put California at the forefront of this movement. According to a report released by the American Federation of Teachers last year, California is one of only 13 states that have set standards in the core academic subjects and made them specific enough to carry any weight. The problem, according to the AFT, is that California, like most states, does not tie these standards to graduation.

Honig's push for more academic subjects and fewer electives and vocational education-type courses is reflected in the various frameworks. Describing the scope and sequence of instruction for different subjects taught in K-12, these documents became powerful tools in Honig's hands for implementing his view of a traditional education.

According to Michael Kirst, director of Policy Analysis for California Education (PACE) at Stanford University and president of the state Board of Education prior to Honig's election as superintendent, these were vague documents before Honig took over and nobody paid much attention to them. The Honig

too recommended a return to more basic instruction, praised the findings. "We must ... restore stability and balance to our reading and mathematics reform efforts," Eastin said.

It was the implementation of this task force's report — which virtually everyone involved agreed was solidly grounded — that set the waters roiling. Conservative legislators, by nature suspicious of the education establishment and the liberal Eastin, took every opportunity they had to bash whole-language advocates and criticize her department. But some of the most cutting criticisms came from Eastin predecessor Bill Honig, now a professor at San Francisco State University, and Marion Joseph, the energetic deputy to former Superintendent Wilson Riles, who first persuaded Honig of whole language's faults.

Last November, Eastin's office began drafting a reading program advisory — the vital policy document that will tell school districts and teachers how to implement the task force's recommendations, effectively supplanting the existing reading framework. But Honig, Joseph and others close to the process soon were accusing Eastin's department of dragging its heels, of being caught between internal ideological camps of whole-language and phonics advocates.

"We wasted a year in this state, even after the [task force] report came out, by not acting fast enough," Honig recently said. The task force report was very clear on the need for phonics instruction and other basic techniques, Honig said in a previous early May interview. "That message for a variety of reasons never got out clearly from the department. ...They keep coming up with a watered-down version of what to do and the [state Board of Education] keeps sending it back."

While Eastin herself dismissed the notion of drawn-out ideological feuding inside the department, she admitted that unanimity had been hard to come by. "Yes, there are different points of view," she said early last month. "This is not a one-size-fits-all group of people. ...[But] I do not believe they are sandbagging me."

Eastin was frank about the tensions that pulled the reading reforms from all directions. "All the politicians got involved," she said. "People selling textbooks want you to buy their text. People selling their conference skills want you to buy their exact language because you'll hire them. ...There's more people here trying to help save their own reputations and salvage their own histories than we need." But the superintendent was particularly incensed at the criticisms from the former department figures. "Two people who ran the department for 22 years have joined together to say it's all the department's fault," she grumped. "I really believe that's unfair."

In mid-May, the advisory process finally came to a head. Following months of drafts that, according to some researchers, still contained too much whole-language emphasis, or did not make the phonics-based programs clear enough, the department finally submitted an official draft to the Board of Education. After another quick round of revision, the board approved it. In its final form, the document advises school districts to focus on phonics, spelling and other basic instructional techniques in the early grades, while keeping the emphasis on literature in later years.

The problem now is to turn the policy document into practice, a daunting project for school districts with substantial investments in whole-language textbooks and training. Governor Pete Wilson has allocated more than $100 million in the proposed 1996-97 state budget for the turnaround, a sum which climbs to a total of $195 million when local matching funds and federal Goals 2000 dollars are included. More than $145 million of this, or $80 per K-3 pupil, would be set aside for reading skills materials based on the phonics and basic-instruction techniques. The rest would be dedicated to teacher retraining and district support of the efforts.

Phonics-based curriculum is already under review by the state. Jerry Treadway, a University of California, San Diego, researcher who serves on the state's Curriculum Commission, said the new instructional materials would probably be approved by the state Board of Education in October, which means the materials will not make it to most classrooms until the 1997-1998 school year.

But whatever difficulties still remain, last month's agreement appeared to have brought at least some of the cold-warring camps together. "This has been a difficult process," said Treadway, who served as one of the phonics-advocate research consultants to the advisory process. "But we are working together."

— John Borland

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frameworks even have their national admirers. When the federal legislation that became Goals 2000 was drafted — a bipartisan effort to raise curricular standards nationwide that began under President George Bush's administration and was signed by President Bill Clinton in 1994 — the California frameworks were used as a model. "California stood out as the national leader because we had these curriculum frameworks — not that the content was great, but that we had them," Kevin Gordon, of the California School Boards Association, explains.

Textbook quality also improved as a result of Honig's focus on curriculum. In approving books for K-8 adoption, the state must consider whether they meet the requirements laid down in the framework. For Honig, who was concerned about the "dumbing-down" of books that schools had been using, this was his way of leveraging publishers to upgrade their offerings. They had to dust off the classics, which many of them had stopped printing.

Students in California today clearly face some special challenges in terms of class size and funding. The state's public schools are the most crowded in the nation, with a K-12 pupil-teacher ratio of just over 24 (the national average is closer to 17). And over the past 20 years, the state has dropped from the top 10 to the bottom 10 in per-pupil spending. Part of this is due to the recession that plagued California in the late '80s and early '90s and from which the state is still recovering. In addition, the K-12 student population grew from 4.2 million in 1984 to the current 5.3 million, of which one in five has only limited English proficiency.

Lest Californians think their students are the nation's slackers, there are indications that in some areas outside reading and math the state is doing well, despite fiscal constraints. The Education Commission of the States, which prepared a report last year on conditions in California schools, found that a growing number of students are taking academic courses — twice as many high school students now take physics and chemistry than did in 1983, for example — and a higher percentage of high school students, in all ethnic groups measured, are completing the subject requirements set by the University of California for admission. Scores on the Scholastic Assessment Test (SAT) are up, and more students are taking the SAT. California's average SAT math score is above the national average, while the verbal score is below the average.

One of the problems with truly assessing how well the "Honig reforms" are doing regards measuring and reporting student achievement. Assessment — what the education community calls a "test" — has become so politicized that statewide testing currently is on suspension. Honig had pushed for a testing system that would tell educators whether students were meeting the expectations of a tougher curriculum, and the result was a hornet's nest of controversy called the California Learning Assessment System, or CLAS, launched in 1993. It replaced the California Assessment Program (CAP), which was highly regarded but didn't match up with the frameworks. In addition, CAP was designed more for testing minimum competence levels rather than higher-

California Rosters 1996

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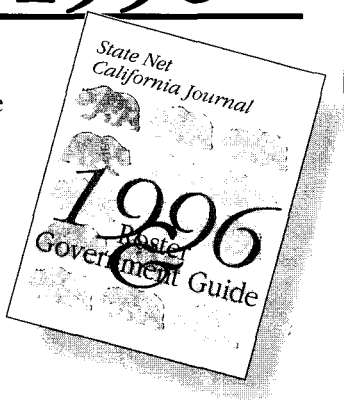

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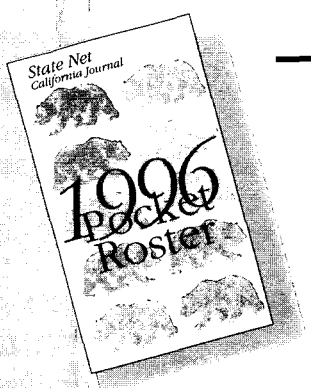

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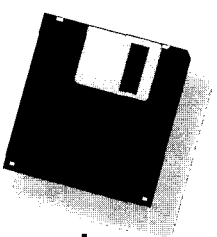

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order thinking.

After a public uproar over CLAS, fed in part by the secrecy surrounding the test's essay-type questions, it was vetoed by Governor Pete Wilson in September 1994. Until the new testing program goes into effect — approved following the demise of CLAS and expected to be implemented in the spring of 1998 — the state has no way to track whether students are learning what they're supposed to learn.

Have the Honig reforms taken hold in today's classrooms? Former state Senator Gary Hart (D-Santa Barbara), a major player in these issues when he served in the Legislature and now director of the Institute for Education Reform at California State University, Sacramento, says it varies.

"In some places, people are working fairly conscientiously to bring about a tougher curriculum, but it needs to be properly balanced with traditional kinds of skills, like spelling and basic computation. There's a certain feeling that we've gotten away from that," Hart says. "A tougher curriculum also requires a higher level of teaching. Instead of just asking students to retrieve information, teachers have to involve them in problem-solving activities, and that's more expensive and harder to replicate from a teaching perspective."

There's also a case to be made that a traditional academic curriculum may not be in the best interest of all students. "Honig's push for more liberal arts courses than vocational education-type courses had the effect of squeezing out courses that would've been more useful to some kids," suggests Bill Chavez, a former lobbyist for the Los Angeles County Office of Education.

The debacle over reading instruction seems to still haunt Honig, and today he freely admits that neglecting basics was a mistake. "We were always of a mind that skills were important, but we weren't clear on the message," he says. Now a professor at San Francisco State University and director of its Center for Systemic Reform, Honig is trying to deliver the message to educators that he didn't communicate 10 years ago, but he finds it tough going. "There's a corrective under way, but it's hard for some people because they bought into the idea that you didn't really need the skills." In articles, a recent book and visits to classrooms, Honig stresses that the scientific evidence on learning to read is clear: Children need systematic instruction in phonics and decoding skills, the so-called basics, to achieve reading proficiency.

Honig was chased from office early in 1993 after being convicted on conflict-of-interest charges involving state contracts with his wife's non-profit education foundation. As a result, he lost the bully pulpit he had used so effectively to build coalitions and bring focus to the education reform agenda. But he did not fall from grace in the eyes of many.

"He will never have the kind of clout he had as superintendent, but he still is looked upon by a large part of the education community as being very thoughtful about education policy and being able to impart a lot of wisdom," says CSBA's Gordon.

And in today's classrooms?

Mary Bergan, president of the California Federation of Teachers, says that "for better or worse, the curriculum is his, and for the most part, it's better."

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Paying the Tab for Recall Elections

Assemblyman Mike Machado was the target of a recall election in 1995. The attempt failed, but the Linden Democrat wants the state to pay the nearly $1 million it cost Machado to defend himself.

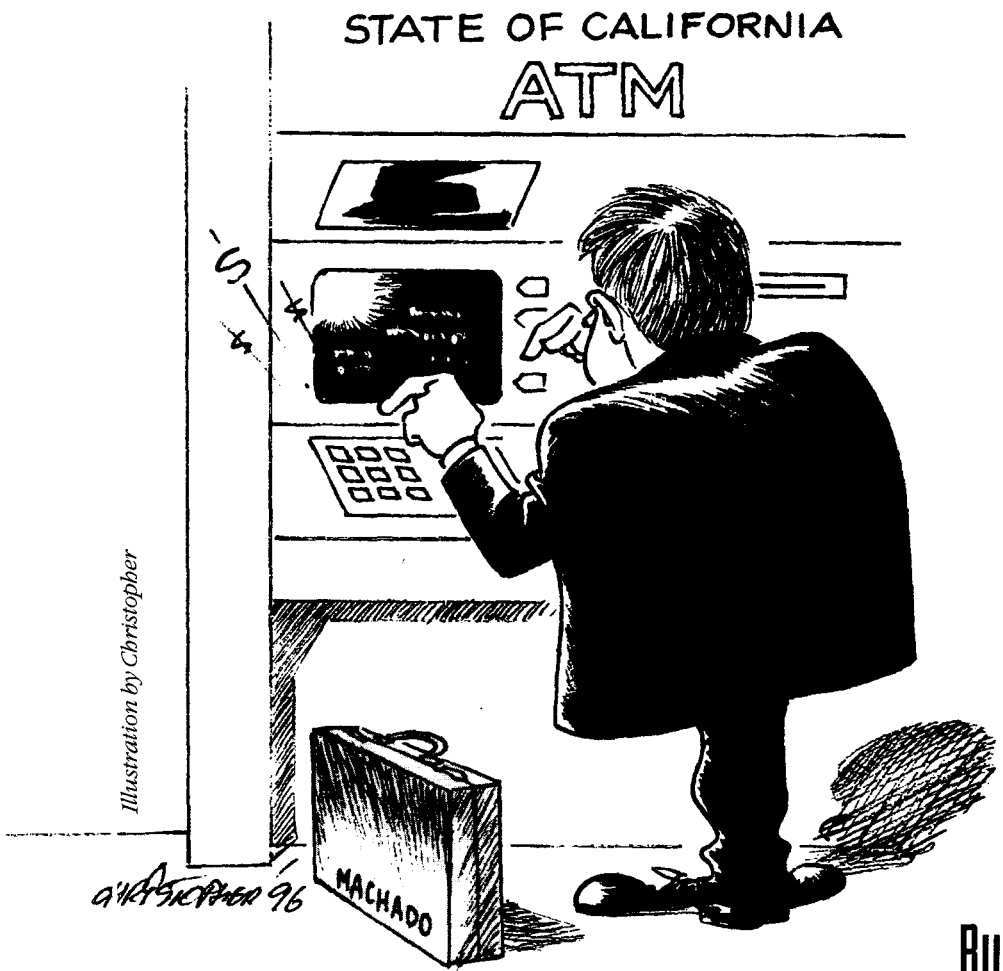

Illustration by Christopher

By Charles M. Price

Mike Machado seems an unlikely target for Republicans. A conservative Democrat from the rural San Joaquin Valley, Machado now and then breaks with his Assembly Democratic colleagues to throw his lot in with the GOP on policy matters. Only this past April, for instance, Machado was the lone Democrat to vote in favor of Governor Pete Wilson's proposed 15 percent tax cut.

But a year ago, Machado was very much in the GOP's crosshairs because he was the wrong guy in the wrong place at the wrong time. The setting was the speakership wars that wracked the Assembly following the 1994 elections. Machado had voted for his own party's nominee as speaker — then-Assemblyman Willie Brown Jr. (D-San Francisco). And that vote gave Republicans the pretext to employ a little-used tactic to try to oust Machado

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Charles Price is a professor of political science at California State University, Chico, and a frequent contributor to California Journal.

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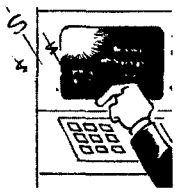
from office — the recall election.

The recall effort against Machado ultimately failed. But the Linden lawmaker was not one to forgive and forget. If the recall itself was rare prior to 1995, Machado's subsequent action was

But the real reason that Republicans went after Machado is more simple and more crass: They thought he could be had...



even more extraordinary: He asked the state of California — through the Board of Control — to reimburse his campaign for the $889,000 cost of defending himself against the recall. Machado and his allies contend that the state constitution provides for the reimbursement, and that it is fair that he be made whole after voters turned back the recall effort. Critics of his action argue that the notion of reimbursement, if upheld, might deter recall efforts against other officials.

Machado found himself at the heart of this controversy because he was caught up in recall mania — the "string 'em up" attitude fostered by Assembly Republicans who sought revenge on two of their own members: Republican-turned-independent Paul Horcher of Diamond Bar and Doris Allen of Cypress. In separate incidents, the pair had deprived Republicans of the speakership after the GOP had gained a 41-vote majority in the lower house during the 1994 elections. First, Horcher voted for Democrat Willie Brown Jr. for speaker (see *CJ*, July 1995). Then, Allen took the speakership for herself with the help of Democratic votes (see *CJ*, January 1996), a maneuver also engineered by Brown.

To punish the dissidents and keep other potential malcontents in line, Assembly Republican leaders applied the seldom-used recall procedure. Under this process, recall activists collect sufficient signatures from registered voters in a member's district within a stipulated time period, and the member is forced to stand for election. If a majority of those voting in that election opt for recall, the member is removed from office immediately and is replaced by whichever candidate receives the most votes from a slate of hopefuls who run in the same election. Both Horcher and Allen met this fate and were replaced in the Legislature.

But Machado was targeted for a different reason. On the surface, Republicans said that Machado ought to be removed because he had promised during his 1994 election campaign to exercise independent judgment when voting for speaker. Then, these Republicans claimed, Machado had the audacity to vote for his *own* party's choice — Willie Brown Jr.

But the real reason that Republicans went after Machado is more simple and more crass: They thought he could be had, and his removal would provide personal gain for the recall leaders — Assemblyman Larry Bowler (R-Elk Grove); Dean Andal, a member of the Board of Equalization who formerly represented Machado's district in the Assembly; and Senate Minority Leader Rob Hurtt (R-Garden Grove), who provided

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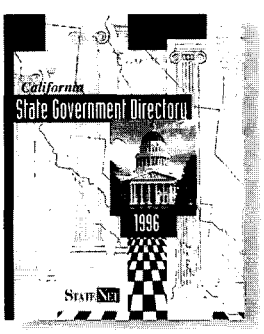

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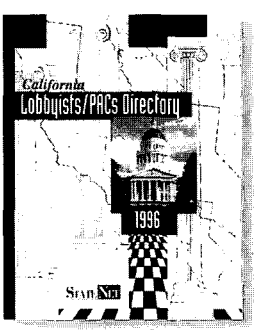

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seed money for the recall's signature drive.

Machado was viewed as vulnerable because his 1994 margin of victory was only a few hundred votes. In addition, had the recall succeeded, Bowler would have been well-positioned to challenge Senator Pat Johnston (D-Stockton) in Johnston's 1996 re-election and thus provide Republicans — and Hurtt — with another vote in a closely divided Senate.

But the plan misfired. As Republican political consultant and recall expert Tony Quinn noted: "In Horcher's and Allen's Southern California, high Republican registration districts, there was intense opposition to Willie Brown and those Republicans who collaborated with him. In Machado's Stockton district, Democrats turned the tables on the Republicans. They argued that Southern California politicians were trying to tell them who their assemblymember should be. It was a very effective message."

Even some Republicans thought the Machado recall effort was unwise. For example, Assemblyman Bernie Richter (R-Chico) considered the Machado recall wrong. "It was an attack on the validity of the election results," he argued. "That's banana republic."

Using the recall to oust a state legislator still is a rare event, although less rare today. Prior to 1994, only three had had to fight off such a threat in the 83 years since the recall was first placed into the state constitution in 1911. Since 1994, however, four members have faced recalls — Horcher, Machado and Allen in 1995 and former Senate President pro Tempore David Roberti (D-Van Nuys) in 1994. Roberti successfully defeated an effort launched by gun enthusiasts angry over his sponsorship of a ban on assault weapons. Although the Allen recall December was the last in the current spasm of recalls, the successes against recalcitrant colleagues suggest the procedure could be used again as a disciplinary tactic.

But the spate of recalls also has renewed a long-standing debate over their value. Critics contend that recalls are too easy to put on the ballot, are costly to local governments and taxpayers, foster "down and dirty" campaigns, poison the already bitter mood in the Legislature and should be used only as a last resort, not to discipline members or to reverse the results of a close election. Proponents, on the other hand, say that the threat helps keep public officials attuned to their constituents. Citing the godfather of recalls, Progressive Hiram Johnson, they argue that the recall was never intended as a last resort but as a "precautionary measure to remove recalcitrant officials."

"The original idea for the recall was to reduce the power of the political boss and party machine," noted Quinn. "Progressives were angry with elected officials who did whatever their boss told them to do." According to Quinn, the recent GOP-inspired recalls were aimed at overthrowing the formerly all-powerful speaker, Willie Brown, and very much in the Progressive tradition.

But one facet of the recall law has yet to play itself out. Article 2, Section 18, of the California Constitution reads, "A State officer who is not recalled shall be reimbursed by the State for the officer's recall election expenses legally and personally incurred." Evidently, it was placed in the constitution to discourage capricious use of the procedure. Incumbents who were vindicated in a recall would have their recall election expenses paid.

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This reimbursement feature applies only to state recalls, not to local efforts. Nor is it a feature in any of the other 14 states that provide for recalls of state officials. To date, only three California legislators have beaten back recalls and thus were eligible for reimbursement: James C. Owens in 1914, Roberti in 1994 and Machado. Neither Owens nor Roberti filed a claim. Roberti said that he considered requesting a reimbursement for recall expenses but decided against it.

"I didn't apply for reimbursement because this recall provision is very vague," Roberti explained. "The major problem is you'd have to establish the fact that the money you're requesting was yours personally and not the campaign's. Also, it's a very long process. The claim has to go to the Board of Control and, if they approve, to the Legislature and governor. There would have been a lot of public debate about whether I deserved the money." For Roberti, it wasn't worth it, and now his one-year statute of limitations has run out.

Machado, on the other hand, is pushing forward. He thinks the amount he should receive "should be defined as the total amount of money I spent to defend myself, $889,000." Machado has promised that if his request is approved, he will give San Joaquin County $150,400 to pay for half of the cost accruing to the county to conduct the election.

"I think that Larry Bowler and Dean Andal ... should put their money where their mouths are," Machado said. "They should offer to pay the other half of San Joaquin County's expenses for the recall." For his part, Bowler tried with Assembly Resolution 18, designed to compensate San Joaquin County for conducting the recall election. The measure died in the Rules Committee.

Machado's reimbursement claim has been submitted to the Board of Control by his attorney, Joe Remcho. The board is responsible for governing claims against the state for money or damages. After input from its staff and Department of Finance consultants, and following a public hearing on the matter, the three-member board will make its decision. The board is made up of Democratic state Controller Kathleen Connell and two appointees of Governor Pete Wilson — Chairman and Director of General Services Peter G. Stamison and a public member, Bennie O'Brien. If they recommend reimbursement, the Machado claim, along with other civil claims against the state and victims of crimes claims, will be incorporated into an omnibus bill introduced in the Legislature. If the board rules against Machado or recommends an amount of compensation less than what Machado believes is fair, he may take the matter to court. In the Legislature, the Board of Control's claims bill goes to the two houses' fiscal committees for approval, floor votes and submission to the governor for his signature or blue pencil.

Given the fact that Machado's request for reimbursement is unprecedented and because the constitution is vague on this point — "expenses legally and personally incurred" — and due to the highly charged partisan nature of the three speakership-related recalls, how much money Machado will receive is very much in doubt.

Not surprisingly, some are contemptuous of Machado's request. "We view this as a publicity stunt," said Bowler Chief of Staff Don Ediger. "It's not a legitimate claim. He's trying to manipulate the media and portray himself as a victim. ...Why should state taxpayers have to fund Machado's recall expenses when he displayed zero restraint in spending on the race? Should we reward financial mismanagement?" Ediger argues that the reimbursement feature was designed when a recall campaign's total budget might be a few hundred dollars — most of it being the incumbent's own money. "But it was never intended to cover the [incumbent's] total expenses in a modern recall campaign."

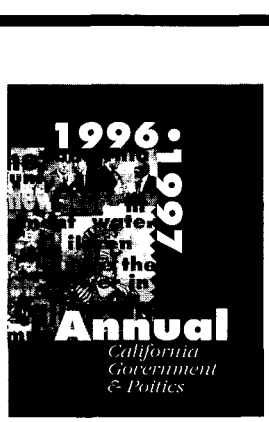
Richter, on the other hand, thinks "[reimbursement] is a good idea, although it should be made crystal clear in the constitution exactly what expenses should be reimbursed."

Besides being compensated for his recall expenses and providing San Joaquin County money for conducting the election, Machado has one further objective in pursuing this quest: to quell what he believes is abuse of the recall process for partisan advantage.

"Progressives put the reimbursement feature as a protective mechanism," said Tim Riordan, Machado's chief of staff. "By providing a reimbursement, some people may think twice about pursuing a frivolous recall in the future."

But Assemblyman Phil Isenberg (D-Sacramento) doubts that reimbursement will deter future recall efforts. "Machado will be reimbursed by state taxpayer funds, not [by] the people leading the recall drive," he said. "The people you want to deter are those using the recall as an election technique or strategy."

Machado himself has introduced AB 2782, which would require the state — not local governments — to pay for the costs of recalls aimed at state officials. Meanwhile, his unusual request for reimbursement adds yet another wrinkle to a recall saga that already has changed the face of the Legislature.



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Logging towns and the great timber meltdown

By Kathleen Dougherty

Consensus hasn't come easy in the so-called "timber wars." In fact, it's rarely come at all. So when environmentalists and loggers forged a rare truce in the northern Sierra town of Quincy, tree fellers and tree huggers across the nation took notice.

In Quincy, an odd coalition of environmentalists, county supervisors and timber interests have achieved what President Bill Clinton, Congress, the California Legislature and a state ballot initiative could not: a forest policy embraced by environmentalists and the logging industry. They call themselves the Quincy Library Group, after the place members first met so as to discourage shouting. One founder is a liberal environmental lawyer who once filed suits to stop clear cutting by the same timber officials he now calls his allies.

Today the lawyer, Michael Jackson, stands shoulder to shoulder with Rose Comstock, the ex-wife of a logger who moved to Quincy after mill closures twice uprooted her family.

"Get the decision making out of Washington, D.C., and back to the local people," Comstock implores. "We are the stakeholders. We are more capable of making better decisions. We can walk down the middle. We can live with each other."

For all who watch over or work in the woods, Quincy shines like a beacon of hope that cooler heads — particularly local heads — can prevail in one of California's most contentious public policy debates.

The Quincy experiment has helped inspire dozens of similar, albeit small-scale, alliances intent on protecting local watersheds without going to court. Forest policy insiders say these grass-roots efforts are perhaps the best bet for bringing peace to the forest after years of turmoil.

But peace may be a long time coming. The map of these grass-roots groups — from the Mill Creek Conservancy in Tehema County to the Forest Roundtable in Siskiyou — is spotty at best. Most have cropped up in the Sierra Nevadas. Few exist on the North Coast where diverse land ownership and habitat issues complicate the political landscape. None of the local groups has accomplished anything near the magnitude of the Quincy accord — a management plan for two and one-half million acres of federal land in the Plumas and Lassen National Forests. Environmentalists get a ban on logging near streams and on one million acres of roadless forest. Industry gets a steady timber supply based on smaller trees and thinning for fire protection. Plumas County residents get peace.

A happy story on the one hand. On the other, Quincy's unique success points up the rift that still divides many timber-dependent communities.

The sad truth is many players in the forestry debate are still shouting — or suing or spinning sound bites that cast the issues in black and white. Greedy timber barons vs. guardians of old-growth. Jobs vs. spotted owls. This is how lobbyists for big guns like the Sierra Club or the California Forestry Association often cast the conflicts over forest management in California and the Pacific Northwest.

"There is no middle ground in Washington, D.C., or Sacramento," laments Jackson. "At those levels, everybody's a trade association that needs to raise money for political activity. You do that by painting the other side as Nazis or Commies."

Kathleen Dougherty is a freelance writer from Northern California.

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Illustration by Norm Hines

Apart from the progress of locals, consensus on forest policies seems as elusive today as when California's great forestry debate came to a head in 1990 and 1991. That's when two highly publicized efforts failed to bridge the divide between industry and environmentalists. In 1990, the Sierra Club and other environmental groups sponsored Proposition 130, the Forests Forever initiative. Its aim was to protect old-growth redwoods and ensure sustainable forestry through a ban on clear cutting and other abusive forestry practices. The timber industry sponsored a competing initiative. In the end, after multimillion-dollar campaigns by timber and enviros, Californians rejected both ballot measures.

But the near-passage of Forests Forever — it failed by four percent — put the timber industry in a negotiating mood. Industry and environmental leaders teamed up to fashion two legislative packages: the Sierra Accord, vetoed by Governor Pete Wilson; and the Grand Accord, in response to Wilson's concerns.

The Grand Accord failed despite backing from most major environmental groups and timber companies. Some blamed the Sierra Club and then-Assembly Speaker Willie Brown Jr. for killing the accord so as to deny the Republican governor a legislative victory.

"Only the extremes in the industry and on the environmental side opposed it," said Assemblyman Dan Hauser (D-Eureka), a lead author of the accord. "I threw up my hands and said there's no way we're going to resolve this legislatively."

Hauser's words were prophetic. State and federal lawmakers both have failed to chart a middle course through the polarized positions of national timber and environmental interest groups.

No one knows the quagmire of forest policy better than

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Congressman Frank Riggs, the North Coast Republican who is knee deep in the lengthy impasse over Headwaters Forest.

Headwaters is the last privately owned virgin old-growth redwood grove on the planet, distinct from thousands of acres of publicly owned old growth protected in national parks. It is the poster child for those who would perpetuate "the timber wars" although the Headwaters controversy has little to do with a broader debate over sustainable forestry.

Adding to a pile of past proposals to end the Headwaters stand off, Riggs has introduced legislation that would swap federal land and timber for the 3400-acre grove. Pacific Lumber, which owns Headwaters, backs the plan. But some congressional Democrats are pushing an alternative backed by the Environmental Protection Information Center, which has sued 14 times to stop the logging of Headwaters.

Pacific Lumber is owned by Maxxam Inc. Chairman Charles Hurwitz, also owner of a failed Texas savings-and-loan whose collapse cost taxpayers $1.6 billion. Under EPIC's proposed "debt for nature swap", the feds would acquire Headwaters in exchange for relieving Hurwitz of his alleged debt to taxpayers. Riggs says he's eager to get beyond the Headwaters debate, but isn't holding his breath. "Based on what I've seen so far from the environmental extremists, I'm not optimistic," he said.

Broader issues of forestry management are just as thorny. President Clinton's 1993 timber summit imposed a compromise attacked by both the industry and environmental groups. And in Congress, the new Republican majority has held off on reforming the federal Endangered Species Act, the basis for environmental lawsuits on behalf of spotted owls, coho salmon and other sensitive species.

"Environmentalists have won the public relations war," concedes Donn Zea, the California Forestry Association's vice president of industry affairs. "In an election year, I think we're going to find a lot of soft spines on the [ESA reform] issue."

Absent successful legislation, forest policy at the federal level has been written by the courts, much to the frustration of family saw mill owners like Bruce Taylor and Art Harwood. Taylor is a Republican and Harwood is a Democrat, but both agree "the little guy" has been the biggest loser in the tug of war between environmentalism and timber.

Unlike large corporations that own much of the forest land they harvest, smaller companies often rely heavily on timber sales off federal land. Taylor, who owns Blue Lake Forest Products in Humboldt County, used to buy about half his logs from four national forests in the Klamath province. But in the decade since Taylor bought the mill, U.S. Forest Service timber sales from the province have dropped from 660 million board feet to 99 million. Blue Lake Forest Products, which used to run two shifts with 225 workers, now employs 110 people on a single shift.

Taylor blames environmentalists' lawsuits to stop logging on habitat of the northern spotted owl, listed as a federal threatened species in 1990.

"It's worked out pretty well for big timber," he says. "I think Louisiana Pacific, just to pick a name, will say, 'Gee, the spotted owl listing was a great thing for us.' They own a bunch of timberland and it all doubled and tripled in value. Meanwhile, half their competition, the little guys who were dependent on federal timber, they've gone."

Harwood, general manager of Harwood Products in Mendocino County, employs 200 at a saw mill in Branscomb since his family shut down its Willits mill in 1987. He credits the environmental movement with speeding reform of abusive logging practices. "But in their zeal to go after the big corporations," Harwood says, "they've lumped us all together...We've always tried to do an exemplary job in the forest and in the community."

At the state level, forest policy remains an open sore in the aftermath of the failed Grand Accord. The California Board of Forestry has tried to dress the wound with its rule-making authority. Not surprisingly, the nine members, appointed by Wilson, draw mixed reviews. Some say the board has gone too far, others, not far enough.

The board has taken the sting out of the clear-cutting issue by dropping the maximum allowable clear cut size from 120 acres to between 20 and 30 acres. It increased logging buffer zones around streams and highways. The board also has imposed new sustainable requirements forcing landowners to show they are growing more trees than they cut.

Every new requirement has added to the thickness of timber harvest plans, the environmental review documents every private landowner must complete to have a logging project approved.

Jim Able, a Eureka forestry consultant who conducts environmental reviews for about 30 small landowners, says the average cost of a timber harvest plan has jumped from $500 in 1986 to $18,500 today.

The cost and complexity of logging approvals has created a "disincentive for small landowners to keep growing trees," Able warns. "More and more people say, 'I'm not going through this again,' and they just cut all the timber they can and go to some other use, like selling it for home sites."

Former Board of Forestry Chairwoman Terry Gorton concurs: "I don't know how many times we have to learn this lesson in this state," she sighs. "If we drive these people out of business, like the orange groves in Orange County becoming houses, it's going to be timberlands."

For all the disagreements over forestry management, few would argue the best solutions are close to home. The Board of Forestry agrees. It funded the French Creek Watershed Advisory Group in Siskiyou County, a local effort to protect salmon and steelhead populations in the Scott River.

There, timber industry representatives, property owners, local environmentalists and the U.S. Forest Service fashioned a logging road repair plan to keep sediment out of the French Creek tributary — and everybody out of court.

"It's best to have Jane and Jim sitting across from the table, calling each other by their first names," said French Creek coordinator Sari Sommarstrom, a watershed consultant from University of California, Davis. "The national organizations don't understand the way local people think. The farther away you get from the problem, the farther you get from the solution."

Meanwhile in Quincy, library group members are waiting on the U.S. Forest Service to follow through on their plan. And the community has united around a common foe: Bureaucracy. "The library group could serve as a model," says Sierra Pacific Industries forester Tom Nelson, "...if we're allowed to succeed."

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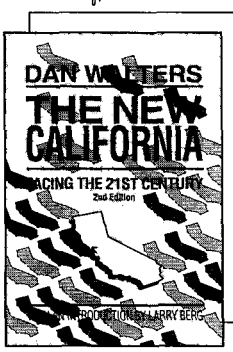

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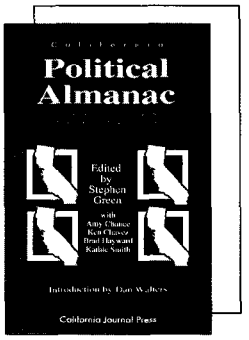

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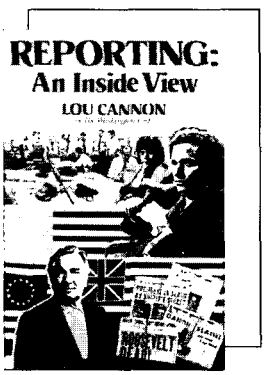

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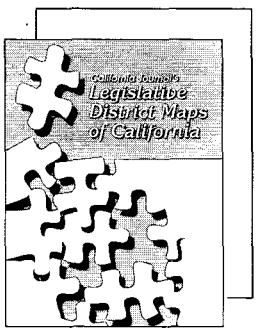

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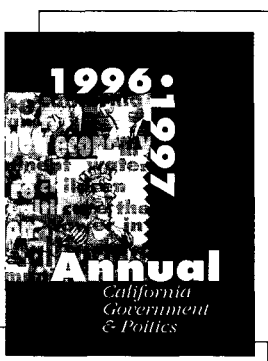

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Washington Notes

perspective

by Marc Sandalow

DiFi's future

Most people who know Senator Dianne Feinstein say she would rather be governor. Nothing against the congenial confines of the U.S. Senate. But Feinstein has always seen herself as a chief executive, not one vote among 100.

So less than halfway through Pete Wilson's final term, many are already speculating that Feinstein will escape the beastly heat of Washington and return to her native state as the state's first female governor.

But governorships are not for the asking.

Whomever replaces Wilson following the 1998 election may have to spend as much as $35 million, fending off rivals in a grueling year-long campaign. It is not at all clear that the 62-year-old Feinstein, who has waged three statewide battles in the last five-and-a-half years, has another campaign in her belly.

The "will-she-or-won't-she?" articles have already begun. But they all reach the same conclusion. Two years before the California Democratic primary, no one knows. Not even the senator. Feinstein herself is doing nothing to either fan the flames or close off any options. For now, she ever-so-diplomatically tells reporters that she is concentrating on being a senator. It's exactly what Pete Wilson said before he gave up his Senate seat in 1990.

The most obvious reason to abandon Washington is that Feinstein sees herself as a governor. Few jobs on the planet compare to running a state of 33 million people with the world's seventh largest economy. For Feinstein, it has always been about being executive. Presiding as mayor in San Francisco City Hall's Room 200, Feinstein reveled in her hands-on approach to governing, whether it was closing the gay bathhouses or filling Market Street potholes.

"If she had her druthers, she'd still be in Room 200," said one colleague who has worked with her since her days in San Francisco.

"She is an executive at heart," said another associate. "When she comes in, she sees something she wants, and she wants it done today."

That was not possible in the Senate even when Democrats were in power. Between filibusters, quorum calls and unlimited amendments, the Senate is many times a place where ideas come to die.

Feinstein has had her successes, most notably in her shortened two-year rookie term, when she pushed through the long-stalled California Desert Bill, and won enactment of an assault weapons ban that old Senate hands told her didn't stand a chance of passage. Since then her role has been more understated. With Republicans in control, it is far more difficult for her to get anything done.

Other Democrats thrive in the minority. California's other senator, Barbara Boxer, has gotten great rhetorical mileage obstructing the will of the new conservative leadership. Feinstein is a different sort of politician. She thinks more in terms of legislation and less in terms of message. Her recent efforts to introduce bills cracking down on gangs and meth-amphetamine production have made her a "cult figure among law enforcement," in the words of an aide, but have not won her widespread attention or accolades.

As much as she is a well-respected fixture of the Senate's political center, Feinstein is still not completely comfortable with Washington's clubby atmosphere. She has frequently annoyed the White House with her independence, perhaps most blatantly in 1994 when she failed to show up at a fund raiser being held in her own honor and featuring President Bill Clinton — because she was back in Washington voting against Clinton's North American Free Trade Agreement.

There are other reasons to leave Washington.

Feinstein was born and raised in San Francisco, and clearly misses California. Her social life remains in the Bay Area, which she still treats as home, commuting across the country a couple dozen times each year. She would like to spend more time with her husband, as well as her daughter and granddaughter, who live in San Francisco.

"If she could be anointed governor without going through another campaign, she would do it in a heartbeat," said a close aide.

That, of course, is not possible. To seek the job she wants, Feinstein must throw her body and soul into another statewide battle. And there is no guarantee she would triumph over Dan Lungren, Gray Davis, Kathleen Connell, Leon Panetta, or any of the other prominent politicians who are rumored to be interested in the post.

Feinstein has miserable memories from her past campaigns. Her aides describe in solemn tones the deep personal toll that each of the previous contests have taken. In 1990 Feinstein was "fired" by campaign manager Clint Reilly for lacking the passion to win. She eventually lost that gubernatorial campaign to Pete Wilson. Two years later, she was savaged in a series of television ads run by her Democratic U.S. Senate opponent, Gray Davis, in which she was compared to Leona Helmsley.

Feinstein won that 1992 campaign to finish Wilson's abandoned Senate seat, but then had to defend it in 1994 against the almost unheard-of Michael Huffington, who spent $30 million of his own fortune and nearly unseated Feinstein. The senator is still nearly $1 million in debt from that campaign. Without a large cadre of Southern California fat cats contributing to her campaign, Feinstein has relied on the same Northern California contributors, and may be loathe to hit them up for the fourth time in six years.

Beside the drumbeat of reporters wanting an answer, there is no reason for Feinstein to make any decisions soon. Advisers say she will wait at least until after next November's election to seriously address the issue.

Governor or senator? Not a bad dilemma for the former San Francisco supervisor.

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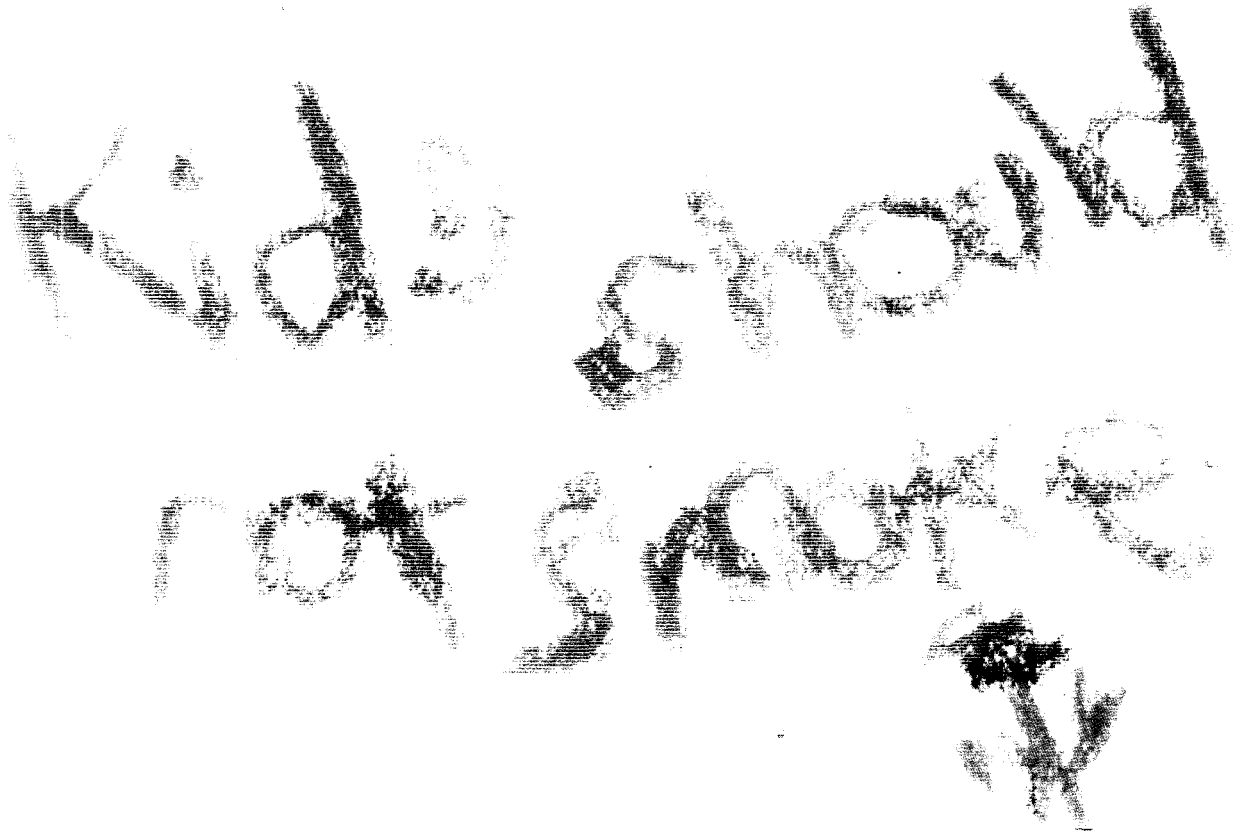

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